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1881

218
Poems, Songs, etc.

BY

ALEX. WARDROP.





Presented
to

Mr. Russell

Blackburn

18th May 1871



Private rented

JOHNNIE MATHISON'S

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

WITH

POEMS AND SONGS.

By ALEX WARDROP.



COATBRIDGE:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR BY ALEX. PETTIGREW.

1881,

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P R E F A C E.

I WILL not say, "because my friends advised me" I appear before the public, nor will I say that I am so illiterate that you must excuse me; no, ring out the arrows of satiric sentiment or song who will—"What's no ill tae gi'e *shouldna* be ill tae tak'." I hold myself in readiness to sink or swim according to the praise or punishment deserved.

It may be some recommendation to my little book, to inform the reader that every piece he reads in prose or rhyme, with only two or three exceptions, have appeared in the following publications:—*The Glasgow Weekly Mail, The Rutherglen Reformer, The Airdrie Advertiser, The Edinburgh Courant, The Troy Northern Budget, and The Belfast Weekly News.* I close this rather disjointed preface in the hope that if there is nothing to instruct there will at least be found some little to amuse. Asking my readers' kind indulgence, I am,

Their humble and obedient Servant,

ALEX. WARDROP.



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JOHNNIE MATHISON'S COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

CHAPTER I.—THE COURTSHIP.

IT fair coves the gowan a'thegither, tae think that oor Sandy, an' Tam, an' Robin, an' Wattie, an' Willie, an' Jamie, ha'e a' gottē married but me—six sons o' an honest auld faither and mithier, happy wi' wives o' their ain. But hech how, here am I, the seventh, wi' no' a leevin' soul tae speak a kindly word tae, except Rover, my auld collie, wha wags his tousy tail, an' looks up in my face as much as to say—It's your ain faut, Johnnie Mathison, for Kirsty Renton crosses ower the muir every ither day, an' you never look the airt she's on. Naething here but hills an' heather—hech, sirs, but this is awfu' wark! But what's the use o' sittin' sighin' here—hist awa' bye, Rover.

Sae Johnnie thraved the key i' the door, drew his plaid ower his shouthers, an' followed his faithfu' Rover. Sae noo, gentle reader, since the wee thack hoose at the foot o' the hill is deserted for an hour, and Johnnie and Rover ha'e

gaen oot tae gether in the sheep tae the fauld, I'll jist tak' the chance o' a keek through the window, an' see what the inside be like frae the ootside o' Johnnie's wee auld-farrant biggin'. The foregoin' you ha'e read cam' thro' the blessing o' guid ears; sae you'll observe you ha'e gotten what I heard. And in the second place, after a bit keek, I intend tae tell you what I see—or rather what I saw—or rather what I've seen. Sae jist content yoursel', an' keep back for a minute, for there's nae room through this wee auld-farrant window for onybody looking but mysel'.

As I leeve, six picturs on the wa'—Sir William Wallace (ane), Robert Burns (twa), Jenny Geddes and her stool (three), John Anderson my jo, John (four), Tam o' Shanter and Souter Johnnie (five), an' Auld Neil Gow and his fiddle (six). Capital, Johnnie—the Land o' Cakes for picturs—you've a noble taste. Look at the ingle-side—half o' an auld cart-wheel for a fender, a six-ribbed grate wi' twa muckle knobs like your nieve at each side o't, a roun parritch pat wi' a broken lid and a bit o' an auld besom shank for a spurtle; a guid fire o' peats, a wag-at-the-wa', a bonnie wee shelf for hauding delf, an' a bowl an' a bottle is't a'. An' faith, there's nae less than a bed like a press: he can shut himsel' in frae a fa'. Sae, noo, I think I've mentioned a' the plenishin' o' Johnnie's house, except a three-legged stool and a wee kist he keeps his claes and treasure in. But here he comes. Sae I'll jist watch him awée—it's no that late yet. He appears to be in an unco hurry—there's something in the win'. Wha's yon comin' ower the knowe? As I leeve, it's Kirsty Renton. I'll awa' along the braes, and coorie doon ahint the whins, an' see what's what. I had nae sooner gotten doon, than Johnnie gaed in tae the hoose, cuist aff his auld grey plaid, threw on his pew shepherd-tartan ane, an' cam poppin' oot like a lamplichter.

Kirsty by this time was within hearin', sae she cries—
"Whaur awa' the nicht, Johnnie?"

Johnnie hooted and hoasted for about five minutes afore he would or could gi'e Kirsty an answer, syne stammered oot—"I-I was j-jist think-thinkin' o' gaun ower tae look the sheep."

"Gaun tae look the sheep," quo' Kirsty, "I'm shure you're jist new dune looking them. It'll no' dae that ava, ye ken, Johnnie. I doot it's something else than sheep you're after the nicht."

Johnnie gied his heid a bit claw, an' scarted oot the best answer in't, considerin' his present position :

"Weel," quo' Johnnie, "if it's no the sheep I'm lookin' for, it's a bonnie wee lamb like yoursel', Kirsty; an' as I've nae experience in courtin', an' ken naething aboot poppin' the question, or sic like, I ha'e jist cam' oot the nicht tae meet you, tae let ye ha'e the chance o' listenin tae an honest man wha has lang lo'ed ye an wished ye were his ain; an' when I think o' oor Sandy, an' Tam, an' Robin, an' Wattie, an' Willie, an' Jamie, that ha'e a' gotten wives o' their ain, an' me left alane in a wee thack hoose in this wilderness o' heather, wi' no a sound to cheer me save the sweet sang o' lav'rock, the bleatin' o' the sheep, an' the bark o' my faithfu' auld Rover—Oh, woman! whiles when I lie doon at nicht, wi' no a leevin soul tae speek tae, an' listen tae the sough, soughin' o' the win', an' the peltin' o' the rain aff the skylight,—Oh, darlin', it gars me a' grue tae think o't."

"Weel, Johnnie," quo' Kirsty, "I ha'e nae doot o' what ye say, an' that whiles at e'en you'll find yoursel' gie eerie, an' if onybody in this world can sympatheesse wi' you in your solitude it's me."

"Thank ye for that, Kirst, my pet, an' may kind heaven find a corner in your leal heart which will be the remedy

for a' my solitude. Shurely, Kirsty, you're in earnest. But it's wrang tae doot ye, for I see the candit truth glancin' in your bonnie blue een. O, Kirsty, jist say that you'll be mine, my bonnie hen, my darlin' lamb, my ain wee cushie doo!"

As Johnnie finished this heart-rendin', or rather side-splitting, appeal for the haund an' heart o' Kirsty, I could easily observe, frae behint the whins, that Kirsty lifted up her apron tae her een, and pretended she was dichtin awa' the saut saut tear. But it never happened, for Kirsty's joys never started tears, but aye a pleasant smile; and this was aye she tried to hide, but Johnnie's quick eye detected it, and thus continued—

"O, Kirsty, my doo, say you'll be mine, an' a' the sheep o' the muir, forbye my wee thack hoose, an' a my siller, will be thine. O, woman, if ye only kent hoo muckle I've thoct o' you! Jist listen tae this canty sang I made sittin' by the ingle side thinkin' aboot you. It'll sing tae something like 'There's nae luck aboot the hoose'."

I saw frae behind the whins that Johnnie cockit his blue bannet awce tae the side, stappit forrit a pace, threw the half o' his plaid aroon Kirsty, cleared his throat, an syne began tae sing. Sae, wi' the blessin' o' a guid memory, I'm enabled tae gi'e the reader, verbatim, Johnnie's sang, and I couldna but lauch when I heard it—

"I widna for the nation's gear, the riches o' the sea,
Exchange the love I long for here—my Kirsty's love for me;
My Kirsty she's a winsome queen, my bonnie heather bell,
The sweetest lass that e'er was seen, or ever tongue could tell,
O wad she promise tae be mine, hoo happy I would be——"

Here he sprang frae Kirsty's side and danced like hey-mynannie, finishing the other line thus—

"O Kirsty, wadna that be fine—fal-al-the-de-dall-dec."

"Weel, Johnnie," quo' Kirsty, "I think ye nicht ha'e tried tae finish the hinmist line kin' o' wis'like."

"O, Kirsty, never mind that the noo. I'll be the proodest man, and most submissive tae your criticism, if you'll only promise tae be mine. Say the word my henny, an' that's naething tae hoo I'll sing."

"I never expectit it would come tae this o't," quo' Kirsty, "but noo, sin' you ha'e brocht me tae the bit—"

"O, my jewel," quo Johnnie, "Kirsty, my lamb, say yes."

"Weel, Johnnie, I will say—yes; but for the love o' peace dinna gang on like that. What wad onybody think were they tae see or hear you an' me gaun on at this gate. But losh, it's grey dark, an' ye ken it's gie eerie tae cross that lang drearie muir mysel'."

"O, but my ain darlin', I'll gang hame wi' ye, an' as for onybody seein' or hearin' us, that canna be, for there's no a body on the muir this nicht but you an' me. Sae we'll jist tak' the nearest cut ower by the whins. Hist awa bye, Rover."

What was I tae dae? for I had selected the whins as bein' the best place tae hear an' see a' that was goin' on—never dreamin' Johnnie or Kirsty kent oucht aboot it. But, heeh howe! as Johnnie says, it wasna tae be, for the whins were nae sooner mentioned, and Rover got the word o' command, ihan the tousie-tailed collie lap richt on the tap o' me, cockit his birse, showed his white teeth, an' barkit like fury. I tried a' that I could dae tae hide mysel' frae the lovers, but Rover played cleek at my coat-tail. O'd, but I was in a fix, between jurrie-worricin' an' Johnnie roarin' oot like a bear, "What the mischief are ye daein' there, ye sneekin' houn', ye? Gore, a wee thing wad gar me ding the ribs o' ye in."

"Oh, Johnnie," pleaded Kirsty, "the man's a stranger, and doesna' ken onything aboot either you or me."

"Stranger or no' stranger, he's nae business there. Come oot o' that, ye vagabon', or I'll twist the neck o' ye."

"Oh, dinna meddle'm, Johnnie, maybe the puir man's lost the road, an' wandered ower here."

"Wandered," quo' Johnnie, "deil a fear o' him wanderin'. There'll be twa or three o' my sheep wandered afore mornin' tho'. Come oot, ye vagabon' ye, come oot!"

I could hide my face nae langer. Johnnie nae sooner saw wha I was, than he held up his hauns, and exclaimed, "Robin Tamson, Robin Tamson!" while Kirsty she began tae greet because I had heard their sentiments an' sang; but I took speech in haund—

"I'm shure nane o' ye need be ill pleased at me bein' acquainted wi' the grand consummation that baith o' ye sae lang an' sae devoutly wished for. I ha'e been lang interested in ye baith, an' often wished tae see ye come tae this o't."

Johnnie by this time had my haund, an' says he, "Weel, Robin, if you're spared tae next Friday nicht, I houp tae see ye dancin' at oor waddin'."

Kirsty was a cousin o' my ain, sae we pairted that nicht, after a', as guid freens as ever. I promised tae attend tae Johnnie's invitation. Let the reader attend as weel, an' in the next chapter he will see oor auld Parish Minister join thegither as leal a hearted couple as ever crossed the muir.

CHAPTER II.—THE MARRIAGE.

“Happy is the bride that the sun shines on.”

THE very sun seemed tae approve o’ Johnnie’s marriage—sic’ a bonnie mornin’ I never saw. The golden beams cam’ dartin’ ower the hills like glitterin’ spears, chasin’ the grey dawn ower the tap o’ Johnnie’s wee hoose. The bloom was on the heather, and a gentle breeze made a’ the moorland wave like the red cross banners o’ a fairy legion. The wee lambs were loupin’ in the sunlight, their mithers lookin’ joyfully on, while Rover, wi’ a new brass collar roond his neck, kept sentry roond the flock, lookin’ prooder far than ordnar. But to my tale : I could lay my lugs there’ no a levin’ soul wad ken the Holms wee thack hoose noo. Guidness me, what a change in six days, I never kent the like o’t—ootside an’ inside fair regenerated. That’s a lang ane, but it’s true. The reader is aware what like Johnnie’s hoose was before—jist look an’ read, an’ see an’ hear, what like the biggin’s noo. I should ha’e told ye a’ before that Johnnie’s hoose had baith a but an’ ben, but “better late than never,” sac ye a’ ken noo. The ither en’, when I saw’t last, held a’ the eatables, namely : twa bags o’ tatics, twa bowes o’ meal, three smokit hams, an’ a big cheese. But, megsty me, what an alteration—the wa’s are a’ whitewashed, the roof jist newly thackit, the wee windows an’ doors a’ painted fu’ snod. It’s

shurely worth a body's while tae ha'e a keek noo. As I leeve, if Johnnie Mathison hasna' been tae Glasca, an' furnished that room the bonniest ye ever saw. Seven picturs on the wa'! I'll begin wi' the picturs: "Norman Macleod"—a grand man tae look up tae—fine, man, Johnnie, that's ane. "The celebrated C. H. Spurgeon"—capital, Johnnie, that's twa. "The Cottar's Saturday Nicht"—better still man, Johnnie, that's three. The ither twa'll no' fa' oot wi' that ane. Hoots, hoots! "Charles Dickens"—what the mischief does Johnnie ken aboot that great novelist; faith, when I ha'e min', he has a copy o' Oliver Twist in the hoose, and ance said tae me he'd like tae ha'e the author's picture—fine man, Johnnie, that's four. "Sir Walter Scott," hingin' if onything aboon Dickens. Gore, Johnnie, ye ha'e placed thae twa like an honest Scotch critic—a real Gilfillan for instance—weel dune, Johnnie, that's five. "Allan Ramsay" and auld "Jamie Hogg the Ettrick Shepherd"—and let me tell ye on compleetin' Johnnie's pictur gallery, that Allan Ramsay an' Jamie Hogg didna' leave a soul on earth wha cherished an' revered their memory more than Johnnie Mathison; aye, or kent their works as weel. He could gie ye Allan's "Gentle Shepherd" aff by heart; aye, an' wi' as muckle grace as tho' he sang the Psalms o' David—an' he liked them tae. But O, hoo charmin' tae listen "'tween the gloamin' and the mirk" tae Johnnie spinnin' ower the tales an' sangs o' the Ettrick Shepherd, and often did he wish that the "Broonie o' Bodsbeck" had appeared (as weel it micht) before the public kent or heard a single word o' "Auld Mortality," then wad auld honest Jamie Hogg stood clear o' pampered critic's lash, that often cuts in ignorance.

But tae complete the plenishin' o' Johnnie's hoose. I maun hurry, for this is the greatest day o' preparation ye *ever saw*. As I leeve, seven stuff-bottomed chairs, a soffie,

a chist o' drawers, a real mahogany table, a carpet, an' a basin stand. Noo for a keek at the kitchen—guidness me, there's neither hunt nor hare tae be seen o' the auld plenishin' except the picturs. A new dresser, half-a-dozen o' guid hame-made chairs, twa new kists (ane o' them Kirsty's), as muckle delf on the dresser-head as wad serve a regiment o' sogers, a new oven grate, an ash-pan, an' the bonniest steel-mounted fender ye ever saw, wi' a brass circle, an' stampit on't the dearest words on earth, "Home, sweet home;" pats an' pans in abundance. The new plenished hoose was scrubbed oot tae the very door.

But, losh, thinks I, it's time that I was hame an' gettin' ready for the waddin'. Sae aff I gaed as hard as I could leg. Jist as I was passin' Luckie Glen's public hoose, that stauns at the end o' the muir, oot pops Neil M'Lean, cryin', "Hae man, Robin, come here."

"I ha'e nae time, Neil, man," quo I, "I ha'e stoppit ower lang at the Holms, an' ye ken ——"

"Oh, I ken a' aboot it" quo' Neil, "you'll be in a hurry for Johnnie's waddin'?"

"Jist that," quo' I; "ha'e ye seen Johnnie lately?"

"Come in by, quo' Neil, "an' I'll tell ye a' aboot it."

Sae in tae Luckie Glen's I gaed, an' wha a' was sittin there, think ye? Sandy, an' Tam, an' Robin, an' Wattie, an' Willie, an' Jamie, an' Johnnie himsel', wha had sent Neil oot tae bring me in; forby Johnnie's guid sisters, an' my ain wife Betty, staunin' wi' a big bundle ablow her oxters, an' dressed up tae the nines.

"What's up, Betty," quo' I, "is this my black suit you've brocht—what's a' the hurry?"

"Weel, Robin," quo Johnnie, "I'll tell ye the way o' that. Oor minister never kent a hait aboot whan the waddin' was tae be, for it seems that he was awa' frae hame last Sabbath

day when we were cried—dae ye see na'. Aweel, ye ken, Willie Walker an' me, yon very Friday nicht, gaed ower tae the session clerk's, an' gied in the cries. 'Jist ance, twice, thrice the morn', Mr. Anderson,' quo' I. Yon's the maist inq̃uesitive body ever I kent. Gore, if it hadna' been for Willie Walker I think oor marriage wadna' ha'e been the nicht yet. 'The bride's name?' quo' he. 'Johnnie Mathison,' quo' I. 'Gae 'wa' wi' ye,' quo' Willie Walker—'Christina Renton.' 'Yes,' quo' the clerk, smooGIN'. 'The bridegroom's name?' 'Christina Renton,' quo' I. 'Gae 'wa' wi' ye,' quo' Willie Walker—'John Mathison.' Govie-dick, it was an awfu' mistak, ye ken, Robin, but it wis Kirsty's Sunday name that did it. 'Both of this parish, I suppose?' 'Baith in this pairish,' quo' I. 'Your father's name?' I'll be kickit if I hadna' tae tell my faither an' mither's name, Kirsty's faither and mither's name, where they were born, an' a' aboot them, as if that had onything tae dae wi' oor proclimation. Aweel, we gaed aff next tae see the minister, an' tell him tae be shure an' come here on Friday nicht, but he had gane aff tae the General Assembly in Edinbro', an' ne'er cam' hame tae this mornin'; sae the way o' a' this bustle, he's for aff the nicht again by seven o'clock. Sae when ever he told Willie Walker an' me this we ca'd in your way, but you had gane ower tae see my new plenished hoose. Sae we jist made Betty hurry ower wi' yer claes, an' dressed as ye see for the nicht's performance; sae get ready a' yer pith, for the minister'll be here directly."

I lost nae time in obeying orders, an in a twinklin a' was ready.

"Where is Kirsty?" quo' I.

"I'm here, Robin," she answered.

"Wasna' this a bonnie mornin'—happy is the bride that the sun shines on."

"I'm shure o't," quo I. "But losh here's the Minister."

"Ae, mighty me," cried Johnnie, "haud a' your tongues. Come here Kirsty, my doo."

"O Johnnie, dae ye ken I'm a' shakin'."

"Shakin'," quo' Johnnie, "what wad gaur'ye shake, we'll be married in a twinklin, syne the shakin'll soon gang off ye."

Enter the Rev. Mr. Grant, auld Luckie showing the way in.

"I am glad to see you all ready and waiting. Your punctuality is a great boon, especially at this time, as I intend to leave for Edinburgh as soon as the marriage ceremony is over. Have you the marriage certificate at hand?"

"What's that, Mr. Grant," quo' Johnnie.

"Gae 'wa wi' ye, Johnnie," quo' Kirsty, wi' a face as red's a nor-wast mune, "it's the paper wi' the cries on't the minister wants."

"Ou-aye," quo' Johnnie, "here's for ye."

"Then," quo' his reverence, "we will just proceed."

Sae we a' stood up—auld Luckie Glen and her servant Shussie Purdie keeking in at the door. But Johnnie seein' them, cried "come in and see the performance." We a' burst oot the lauchin' at Johnnie cain' what Mr. Grant, in a mild rebuke, ca'd a solemn and divine ordinance instead o' a performance. After the usual introduction, he came on tae the final poppin' o' the quaestions, and quo' he, "John Mathison, are you willing to take Christina Renton as your lawful wedded wife?"

"Tae be shure I am," quo' Johnnie.

"And that you will nourish and cherish her in sickness and in health, so long as you live?"

"Wi' a' my heart," quo' Johnnie.

"Well spoken," quo' the minister, for he kent a guid answer tae a question when he heard it. 'Turnin' next tae Kirsty,

he continued—"Christina Renton, are you willing to take John Mathison as your lawful wedded husband?"

Kirsty made a very polite bow.

"That'll no dae," interrupted Johnnie, "nane o' your beckin an' booin, Kirsty, my hen, jist answer Mr. Grant the same way as I did, or it'll no dae ava ye ken."

We a' burst oot the lauchin again. But the minister assumin' a very solemn air, we stoppit it in a minute, and heard Kirsty say, "I am, sir."

"And that you will be obedient, and dutiful, and loving, toward him in everything pertaining to your temporal and spiritual welfare in sickness and in health, so long as you live?"

"Wi' a' my heart," quo' Kirsty.

"Capital, capital, Kirsty lass, that's the way tae say't. Nane o' your mim-mooth'd mumlin' wi' me. The minister's no the least angry wi' ye bein' candid. Is that right, Mr. Grant?"

"Quite right, John," quo' the ministef, "but let us proceed. Here are the papers; aff wi' the glove, Walker, and on wi' the ring. See an I'll put it on richt."

This done, an' the papers signed, an' a' quiet, the minister, wi' the greatest solemnity, proclaimed Johnnie Mathison and Kirsty Renton to be man and wife, finishin' up a real neat worded exhortation in the followin' usual way—"What God has put together let no man put asunder." After a short but most impressive prayer for the future comfort and happiness o' the newly-married pair, he stappit forrit, took Kirsty by the hand, and said for the first time, "Mrs. Mathison, I wish you much joy in your married life," and taking Johnnie wi' his ither haund said, lauchin' pleasantly, "I wish you all prosperity, John, and may your future life be one of love and peace."

"Aye, and plenty," added Johnnie.

"Yes, and plenty," quo' the minister. "You have to-night very prominently displayed the characteristics of an ardent lover. I wish you both well, and may you always be as ardent as you have been. You will excuse me, since my time is up, and I must away."

"No, no, Mr. Grant," quo Johnnie, "I ken you'll no stop tae ha'e a bit reel, but shurely you'll stop an' ha'e a bite o' supper and drink oor healths."

"John, you really must excuse me; so, good-bye all. I will be sure to call and see you occasionally."

CHAPTER III.—THE SUPPER AND DANCING.

NAE sooner had the Rev. Mr. Grant taken his leave o' the assembly than groups o' stalwart ploughmen fired a volley in the air, an' a lot o' servant lasses gaed freedom tae their lungs in the grandest burst o' "three cheers" ye ever heard. Georgie Robison, the biggest o' the ploughmen, cried tae Nannie Nicolson, the biggest o' the maids—"Come on, Nannie, ye jaud, ither three cheers for Johnnie and Kirsty." Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah! The time they a' were cheerin' a wee herd laddie, wha had left his kye tae gang tae Denny if they liked for him, was stanin' keekin' in at the window, an' cryin' every noo and then "Oot wi' the bottle, Johnnie; oot wi' the bottle. If ye dinna gi'e us a dram it'll no be nae waddin' ava'—oot'wi' the bottle."

"Come back oot o' there, you peeseweep-lookin' thing ye," roared big Georgie Robison, "an' gae wa' an' get your kye in."

"Nae fear o' me," quo' wee Tammie Kerr, the herd laddie, "dae ye think I'll gang awa' noo—and me first here?—I wad be divert keen. I've kent Johnnie Mathison langer than ye, an' gane a' his errands this last three years, an' I'm thinking I've as guid a richt tae see the fun as you."

"Gore, if auld Jamie Lowrie come ower the muir, he'll 'oot wi' the bottle' ye," quo' Georgie.

"Will he?" quo' wee Tammie, "I'm nane feared for him."

He's a better maister than yours, an' no sae thrawin' an bow-leggit by a gie lang way. An' he kens by this time that I'm here, an' yours doesna."

By this time Johnnie and Willie Walker, the "best man," made their appearance wi' the bottle an' the shortbread.

"Whaur is wee Tammie Kerr?" cried Johnnie.

"I'm here," answered Tammie.

"Weel," said Johnnie, "rin ower tae the Holms—you'll no be a minute—there's the key, open the door and let Rover oot, puir douggie, he may as weel enjoy the feast and fun as the rest."

So wee Tammie, wi' his wee bit crummie stick in his haund gaed scuddin ower the muir and opened the door, and oot flew Rover tae his maister's side in nae time.

"Man, you're a clever callan," quo Johnnie, as wee Tammie handed him the key. "See, ther's a lump o' short-breed tae ye, an' see, tak' that"—an he slippit a twa-shillin' piece in wee Tammie's haund, saying, "mony an errand you've run for me, puir wee mitherless thing, sae rin awa noo an' get in the kye. An' come an' see Kirsty aye when you've time. You'll no want a mither nor yet a hame as lang as Kirsty an' me's thegither."

Sae wee Tammie ran aff as prood as a peacock, an' auld Jamie Lowrie was weel enough pleased, although his bit herd was a wee thing late.

The lads and lassies noo had gane,
Auld Luckie Glen's big room was glancin',
An' roon' the table a' was fain
Tae ha'e the supper, syne the dancin'.

As Johnnie an' Willie entered the hoose o' rejoicin', Luckie was hurryin' through the lobby a' pechin, carryin' a big roast o' beef, a gigot o' mutton, an' a guid big hare that

Rover caught the day before the waddin'. Johnnie whispered tae her as she passed, "There's naething like a clear conscience an a guid stamack tae receive its ain. Stap ben tae the kitchen when ye lay yer load doon, we'll pay before partakin'. Eh, Rover, my auld douggie, is this you man. An' ye was lockit in, was ye? It wadna' ha'e dune, ye ken, tae be rinin' at my foot this day abune a' days. But you're oot noo, my auld douggie, sae I'll jist licht my pipe an' ha'e a bit draw till her ladyship comes ben."

Sae I saw that Johnnie drew his chair in ower tae the fire, an' sat doon. Rover, wi' his new brass collar roon his neck, stood as he often used tae dae, waggin' his tousie tail, an' lookin' up in his honest maister's face. I ha'e nae doot, gentle reader, ye ha'e often read Hamlet's soliloquy on death, an' King Henry's soliloquy on sleep, an' Johnnie Mathison's soliloquy on marriage—I'll lay a croon ye never read that ane yet. Weel, Johnnie jist begins in a similar way tae—I dinna want onybody tae be under the impression it's a parody, for I canna tolerate a parody on onything that's grand, for it jist seems tae me ower a' the world like parrots speaking after men, or a sparrow trying tae whistle like a lav'rock. Sae look ower at Johnnie, and listen as ye look—

JOHNNIE MATHISON'S SOLILOQUY ON MARRIAGE.

To be or not to be, that used to be the question :
 But noo it's settled. Maister Grant has tied the knot
 That soon must wear awa' just bit by bit
 Till heaven nips the twine, and pairs us at the grave.
 But oh ! it gaur's me grue tae think o' pairting thus.
 Hoo often ha'e I sighed, while sittin' by the ingle-side,
 And wished that I was married.
 What'mak's me speak or think in sic a strain ?
Ha, ha ! I've fund it oot—the melancholy o' my lonely solitude
Had pitched its eerie tent within my breast,

And thocht that I wad nurse and keep it here for ever.

[Striking his hand on his breast.]

But noo, sin' Kirsty Renton has made solemn vow

Tae lo'e me a' her days,

This dweller o' my youth and after years seems loath tae part

Wi' ane that's nursed it here sae lang.

Oh! sweet, sad, weeping sister o' my past affection,

I must say farewell!

Nae mair your weird and solitary influence will move my thochts,

This nicht's your last wi' me;

An' marriage—aye, an' marriage—is your death-blow.

Nae mair the lichtnin's flash, the fearfu' thunderbolt,

That bursts the clouds and shakes the very earth;

Nae mair the drifted snaw nor patterin' rain,

Nor misty morns, nor windy nichts, will gar me grue:

I'm married noo—Oh, solitude, a lang fareweel!

The Lord be praised, my Kirsty's ta'en your place,

"Hoot toot, Johnnie, you're shurely in a reverie," quo' auld Luckie Glen, attracted by the voice and gestur' o' her host.

"Me in a reverie," quo' Johnnie, "what puts that in your heid? I was jist thinking."

"Thinking," quo' Luckie, "div you speak oot lood when you're thinking?"

"No," quo' Johnnie, "I think first, and syne speak."

"Weel, Johnnie my man, let me tell ye that a' your thinking has been before you cam' in here, for I cam' ben jist at your heels, and you've been speaking ever since, an' takin' fareweel wi' folk, an' caperin' and gaun on you never saw the like. Losh, I was turning frichted for you—guid guide us a'—an' no' a body in the kitchen but you and Rover; an' he was jist as frichtit like as me."

"Aweel, aweel," quo' Johnnie, "there's nae use o' gi'eing you an explanation. You heard the feck o' what I said, an' seemingly you understand it aboot as weel as Rover. Can

you tell me if the supper's ready, and what's the damage? You'll ha'e every chance o' understanding that."

Luckie handed him her bill, and financial affairs being settled, Johnnie, wi' a lichter heart, gaed marching ben tae the feast.

"The table wi' dainties was spread,
The guests—jolly fellows—were gether'd,
They first, as the fashion is, fed,
Syne funnily jokit and blether'd."

"Come awa', Johnnie, whaur the mischief ha'e you been?" quo' Sandy.

"Johnnie lad, you're dune for noo," cried Tam.

"Nae fear o' that," quo' Robin, "Kirsty'll mak' a guid, canty, kindly bit wifie."

"Aye, if she doesna wear the breeks," quo' Wattie.

"Nae fear o' that," says Willie.

"That a' depends on Johnnie," quo' Jamie.

"If he's aye as saft's he used tae be, Kirsty may put them on and wear them for ever amen, for oor Johnnie, I'm brawen shure," quo' Sandy's wife. "If it's keeping the purse you mean by wearing the breeks it wad be 'Wae's me for Prince Charlie' wi' the maist feck o' men if their wives didna wear them."

"That's whaur you're richt," quo' Tam's wife. "There, for example, oor Tam—it wad tak' a mint tae keep him gaun an' it werena for me."

"My certy," quo' Robin's wife, "I wonner what a lot o' men wad dae wi' the purse. Oor Robin wadna gang and buy a bawbee's worth o' saut although it was tae save his life."

"I daursay that," cried Mrs. Wattie, "what div they ken about buying intae a hoose."

"I'm thinking," said Mrs. Willie, "you'll a' ken as weel

as me that Parliament has thrown tae the wins the bill on 'Women's Richts,' whether they may pass the ane on 'Hame Rule' or no I dinna ken ; but if I had any influence I wad move that John Bright and his sister wait on Mr. Parnell in order tae unite thae bills ; an' if Parnell objects tae the proposal, tell him tae gang hame and get some counsel frae the wife, an' stop his riotin'. Hame Rule in Ireland withoot Women's Richts 'll never dae. I could tak' in haund mysel', if I had Parnell in a quate corner, tae cool the Irish bluid o' the Land Leaguers in five minutes."

"Hurrah for Willie Mathison's wife!" cried Mrs. Jamie, "I'll side wi' her. A wheen o' you men coont us women naething, like that bletherin' body John Grumlie, but we'll maybe rule the roast yet."

"Haud ower your plate then," quo' I, "you'll relish this maybe as weel as the ither ane ye mean. Wire in tae the beef, Sandy : gore, you're daein' naething. See, there's the hare that Rover catched, forbye a gigot o' mutton, never touched yet."

"I propose," quo' Mrs. John Mathison, "that Rover get a guid share o' the hare. Puir Rover, you deserve the prize you ran for."

"Capital, Kirsty, my doo ; Solomon wi' a' his glory an' his wisdom, an' his wives, had not a wife amang them half as wise as you. Here, Rover, my auld douggie, there's life an' mettle in yer heels, or else ye ne'er had catched it. Come on, Davie Dawson an' Neil Millan, tune up yer fiddles. Clear the table quick, an' mak' room for the Floors o' Embro'. Hooch an' dance till mornin'—then for oor marriage jaunt, Kirsty, my ——"

"Nane o' yer doos na, Johnnie, you mak' a' the company lauch when ye say that."

"Oh, my h——"

"Nor yer hens either, na, Johnnie. I'm yer wife noo, min' ye."

"O, Kirsty, but yer my ——"

"My what?" quo' Kirsty.

"My wife," quo' Johnnie.

"See Robin Tamson an' the wife sittin' lauchin' ower there."

"Hoo are ye, Robin?"

"Fine, man," quo' I. "Wire in, Johnnie."

"Is that a' the delf, Shusie?"

"That's them a', Johnnie."

"Robin, oot wi' the end o' this big table—that's the hammer; are ye baith ready, you fiddlers?"

"Baith ready, Johnnie—Row-de-dal-dow."

"Come on, Kirsty, my ——"

"My what?"

"My wife—aye, an' my ain wee darlin' wife, tae. Come on an' lead aff the Floors o' Embro'. You're ——"

"You're what, na, Johnnie?"

"You're the brawest floor that ever was in Embro'."

Neil an' Davie, the fiddlers, were neighbour herds, an' had ye seen them on a simmer nicht, sittin' on a tuft o' heather at the hill fuit, playin' tae a lot o' rosy-cheekit lads an' lassies, dancin' tae their weel played tunes like hey-my-nannie, the decorations o' a ball room, I've often thought, are far in the shade tae a' aroon them, aboon them, an' aneath them. A clear spring o' water frae the hills jist at haun, the clear blue sky, ten thousan' twinklin' stars, the pure air o' heaven, an' the smilin' harvest mune sendin' its silvery licht across the moorland, cheerin' their young innocent hearts, an' displayin' tae their gleg een the strongest, sweetest, dearest, carpet in the land o' nature. But, hark-ye, what is this that Johnnie's sayin' noo :

"O'od, Kirsty, div ye no think it wad be a guid plan tae slip awa' ower tae the Holms when they a' get up tae the next dance, for jist as shure's the world oor Robin'll propose the beddin', an' I wadna for a' the wealth that's in't ha'e ony siccan capers afore oor Sandy, an' Tam, an' Robin, an' Wattie, an' Willie, an' Jamie."

"O, but, Johnnie," whispered Kirsty, "Robin never wad propose a thing like that."

"Wad he no—aye, jist as shure as death. Oor Robin is as loyal a subject as you'll find in Scotland, an' I never met a man that wad fecht quicker for his queen; but, Kirsty, he wad propose the beddin', I tell ye, although the whole royal family were stanin' listenin' tae him, he's sae fu' o' fun an' deevilment."

"Aweel," quo' Kirsty, "we'll cheat him; say you something so that I can slip oot an' you follow."

"Awa' ben tae the kitchen, Kirsty, an' see if her ladyship is no comin' wi' the toddy yet," cried Johnnie.

"That's richt," cried the dancers.

"Gore, I'll awa' ben an' gi'e her a haund."

"Fine, man, Johnnie."

Sae, by the time the reel was dune, the Holms was reached and the pair snugly inside.

"Did ye bar the door?" quo' Kirsty, as Johnnie struck a spunk tae licht twa candles on the mantelpiece.

"I baith barred an' snibbit it, my hen."

"I say, Johnnie, did ye write yon sang sittin' on this wee stule?"

"The very stule I was sittin' on—but listen, here's a better lilt than yon :

KIRSTY, MY DOO.

O, Kirsty, my doo, we are baith merriit noo,
I'm sure it's a bargain we never will rue;

Oor hearts ha'e been true sin' we started tae woo,
My Kirsty for ever her Johnnie will lo'e.

O, Kirsty, my doo, you're as fresh as the dew,
An' as bricht as the stars twinklin' up in the blue,
An' as pure as the wee stream that's ne'er paddled thro';
I owe this felicity, Kirsty, tae you.

O, Kirsty, my doo, a' oor plenishin's new,
An' here is the purse that's been haundled by few;
Gif it be the breeks—ye may don them the noo,
An' wear them for ever, O, Kirsty, my doo.

O, Kirsty, my doo, I ha'e bocht ye a coo,
An' built a wee craw that'll haud a bit soo;
I want ye provided for a' the year thro';
Sae that ends my lilt tae ye, Kirsty, my doo.

"Weel dune, Johnnie, that deserves a kiss."

"O, my queen o' Sheba, what on earth gaur'd Jacob greet
when he kissed Rachel; aye, dae ye ken, Kirsty, it mak's
me lauch rather. What ailed the guid auld man?"

"I think he had kissed ower mony, an' was vexed for't."

"Dinna let that enter yer heid, Kirsty."

"Green grow the rashes, O,
Green grow the rashes, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spent
Were spent among the lasses, O."

"I say, Johnnie, did ye ever like anither lass but me?"

"No, no, Kirsty; as shure as death I never did. What
puts that in yer heid?"

"O, jist because ye sang, 'The sweetest 'oor that e'er I
spent was spent among the lasses,' an' I was wonderin'."

"O, Kirsty, wad ye ha'e me tae turn a plagiarist?"

"What's that?"

"That's ane wha steals the essence o' anither's brains, in-
stead o' his purse, an' in my opinion the a'e crime is jist as
bad as the ither."

"An' what dae ye mean by that, Johnnie?"

"Oh, jist that I micht ha'e sung, 'The sweetest 'oor that e'er I spent I spent it wi' my Kirsty, O.' But wi' a' their endless progression that the Rev Mr. Grant preaches aboot progression's never come the length o' makin' better onything that 'Robin' penned, or Shakspeare penned, or Milton penned, or Byron penned. Tennyson or Longfellow couldna write a sang like 'Green grow the rashes' for their life, an' it's no' very likely I wad try tae alter a sang that appears to be as far on in the future for truth and beauty as the birth of a new poet a hundred years after this."

"Weel Johnnie, I'll no' say but yer right; but it seems that there's mair progression in preachin' than in writin' poetry. Talmage, for instance, has quite a novel style; he tak's a text frae the word o' God, an' preaches on the American Union an' the ballot box, an' imagines that he'll preach Canada intae the United States. What does the blether think Britain's made o', or wha, does he think, on this side o' the Atlantic, wad pray for sic new-fangled norries as yon? He may thank the guid-at-giein' Liberals o' Parliament if they let Canada slip oot o' their fingers. But before I wad see sic a thing tak' place, I wad rather pray that Mr. Talmage's boasted star-spangled banner be made intae an English dish cloot. Na, faith, gi'e Mr. Talmage Canada, the Czar o' Russia India, and Mr. Parnell Ireland—na, na, let us keep what the will o' heaven has bequeathed us, and let him wha covets tak' oor possessions if he daur. For my part, if I had had onything tae dae wi' the Alabama Claims I wad ha'e sent ower word tae Mr. Yankee tae come and collect them."

"Gore, Kirsty, I think ye wad mak' a far better politician than oor Wull's wife," quo' Johnnie. "I houp the bill for women's richts 'll pass yet. As I leeve, there's Rover at the

door—deserter number three frae auld Luckie's. I say, Kirsty, if we dinna shape awa' tae oor beds, they'll sune be a' ower here thegither, an' is't no far better tae gang quietly, than ha'e Robin forcin' us in, an' a' the lave lauchin' at us?"

"Shurely, shurely," quo' Kirsty.

Sae the happiest couple that ever was wed,
Wi' fond lovin' hearts gaed awa' tae their bed;
Quo' Johnnie tae Kirsty, "We'll cuddle till noon,
Syne rise an' get ready for bonnie Dunoon."

We will leave the happy couple in the charms o' matrimonial bliss, and escort the reader back tae Lucky Glen's. Sandy, an' Tam, an' Robin, Wattie, an' Willie, an' Jamie, and their wives, Willie Walker, Mary Gillespie, Neil M'Lean, an' Davie Dawson, an' Shusie Purdie, auld Luckie, an' last but no' least, oor Betty, were a' greatly concerned as tae whaur Johnnie and Kirsty had gane tae, never dreaming that they were safe and soond ower at the Holms. Fine I kent, but I never let on.

"What the mischief's keeping oor Johnnie and Kirsty?" quo' big Robin, takin' oot his watch. "Guidness alive, it's five o'clock in the mornin'—we'll sune need tae be on the road."

"We've time eneuch," quo' Mrs. Robin, "the train disna start till half-past seven. We maun see the beddin' first."

You will observe, gentle reader, big Robin had anither firm believer in the orthodoxy o' the beddin' business.

"An' anither thing," quo' she, "we maun a' ha'e a cup o' tea ower at the Holms before we part."

"Yonder's wee Tammie Kerr," cried Davie Dawson, "jist new oot wi' the kye. He'll can tell us whaur they are."

"Whaur is Johnnie an' Kirsty?" we a' cried, as Tammie drew near.

Tammie pointed wi' his wee crummie stick, an' says he—

"Div ye no see Rover sittin' at the peat stack yonder?"

"That's rather a queer way o' answerin' a question," quo' I.

"Aye, but it's an auld fashioned ane for a' that. An' div ye no see the lum reekin'?" continued wee Tammie, "Weel, there was nae fire on last nicht; an' if you're no a donart, ye micht easy ken that Johnnie an' Kirsty are ower yonder tae. Robbers dinna often kin'le fires unless in their ain conshans; forby, there's no' a key wad fit the lock o' Johnnie's door hereaboot that I ken o', an' he got it frae me last nicht. An' when I saw the lum reekin' this mornin', I thocht tae mysel', Luckie Glen an' Shusie Purdie are snorin' an' sleepin', an' a' the lave o' ye ower at the Holms, backin' up the wad-din'. But here ye are, speerin' questions ye micht answer wi' a look."

"Puir wee callan," quo' Sandy, "you've a bonnie curly heid—aye, an' a weel shapit ane; an' I'll be gie far cheated if yer wee raggit breeks an' velveten jacket are no' converted intae black anes yet, wi' a swallow-tailed coat, a lum hat, an' a white choker. Tammie, wad ye no' like tae come an' herd wi' me?"

"O, weel eneuch, but I'm leavin' Jamie Lowrie gin the term, an' your Johnnie's gaun tae sen' me tae the schule twa or three year, an' I'll help amang the sheep an' gang the errands tae. Sae that's the way I canna gang wi' you, Sandy."

"I'm shure I wish ye weel at onyrate," quo' Sandy.

Sae we bade the wee herd laddie a guid mornin'.

Kirsty an' Johnnie by this time were busily preparin' an early breakfast, ha'ein' made up their minds for the first train tae Glasca, in order tae get the boat for Dunoon.

"Open the door," cried big Robin, as we reached the Holms. "Gore, you've dune me oot o' the pleasure o' pu'in' the cool an' the mutch on this mornin'."

"Open the door yoursel'," cried Johnnie; "the kettle's boilin', the jar's below the table fu' tae the brim, an' lots tae eat—London buns an' cookies by the score, an' a guid breakfast, an' something guid tae synd it doon. That savours mair o' philosophy than makin' oor Kirsty blush tae the e'en holes."

Sae wi' that big Robin lifted the sneck, an' we a' marched in.

The drink in abundance gaed roon,
Nane shyly declined tae gang near it;
Quo' Tam, "That's the stuff when it's doon
For raisin' the fun an' the speerit."

CHAPTER IV.—THE PARTIN' O' THE BRITHERS.

DEPARTURE OF THE GUESTS.

AFTER the marriage guests had dined, an' a' were ready for the road, Willie Walker proposed that the company should form in pairs, and arm in arm gang marchin' tae the station.

"Agreed," cried Johnnie, "Kirsty, you an' me'll lead the van."

Sae Johnnie snibbit baith the windows, threw the key in the door, leavin' Rover in possession o' the hoose until they baith cam' hame. Sae we a' gaed linkin' in the manner described, and as we marched alang we heard wee Tammie Kerr blendin' his sweet voice wi' the feathered minstrels in his favourite sang, "Come a' ye jolly shepherds that whistle through the glen." But trains'll wait on nane but royalty, sae, undisturbed, we let the bonnie laddie sing awa'.

Johnnie's brithers were a' sheep farmers like himsel'. But Johnnie, being the eldest son, inherited the Holms an' a' the grund aboot it when his faither deet. Auld Mathison, as he aye was ca'ed, through a thrifty life o' perseverance and sobriety, was enabled before his death tae purchase for his sons, tae mak' them a' alike, six small sheep-farms south-east o' Galashiels. Thus the reader will observe where Johnnie's brithers cam' frae, and where they mean tae gang tae when

they reach the station. The station-maister, seeing us, cam' rinnin' tae the gate and bade us hurry, as the train for Gala-shiels was due. Big Robin ran and got the tickets jist in time tae see the train come slidin' tae the platform. I heard big Robin crying something about the "lambin' time" tae Johnnie, but ere he could reply the train was roond the corner oot o' sicht. It was Johnnie and Kirsty's turn next, sae awa' they went. John Gorman, an auld Irish body, an' notoriously in favour o' the Land League, stappit in tae the same compartment wi' them, an' siccan an argie-bargiein' took place as you never heard the like o'.

"Ireland for the Irish, John—that's what we want."

"An' that's what you'll no' get," quo' Johnnie.

"How do you make that out?"

"Hoo dae I mak' it oot—because the English government'll never let ye get Ireland tae yoursel's; although they micht shake haunds up tae the elbows wi' pleasure at partin' wi' ye a'."

"Be my sowl they would not, John. But I'll tell you what they'd do—they would weep themselves out of existence, and that quickly too, over such a parting."

"Weel, they micht greet in Englan'," quo' Johnnie, "I'm a Scotchman, an' can speak o' nae kintra but my ain; an' I can assure you, John, instead o' greetin' Scotland wad smile in richest abundance at partin' wi' every soul o' you the nicht. Gi'e us ower the Scotchmen an' we'll gi'e ye ower a' the Irishmen, an' let Englan' dae the same, what better wad ye be?"

"A thousand times better, my boy. Give us our own sceptre, our own laws, our own industries, and our own people, and Ireland will be the greatest nation on the earth."

"Weel, John, I hinna the power tae gi'e ye what ye want. But jist let us suppose I had. You forgot the croon in your

demands, but I'll gie ye it alang wi' the sceptre. That's the first fecht—wha's tae sway it? Weel, secondly, as oor minister says in his sermons, the laws an' the enforcin' o' them, is fecht number twa. Your own industries—I suppose you mean by that your public works—weel, that's fecht number three: that the man wi' maist capital'll win. Yer ain people next, I think; very weel, you must accept the natives o' Ulster, an' they're deevilishly opposed tae the principles o' you Leaguers, an' unless some miraculous earthquake or ither carries yon province bag an' baggage tae Englan', you may gi'e up the ghost o' a chance o' ever gettin' what ye want."

This queer discussion terminated at the College station. Johnnie bade Kirsty tak' his arm an' haud on like grim death. Sae doon the High Street they marched, an' alang the Tron-gate, until they cam' opposite the far-famed Macleod's Wax-work an' Menagerie.

"What's that ower there?" quo' Kirsty.

"I'm shure I dinna ken," quo' Johnnie, "but we'll awa ower an' see."

Sae they crossed the street, an' gazed wi' astonishment in at the windows.

"Losh, but that's a braw place; what dae ye think o' gaun in tae see't, Kirsty?"

"Come awa' then, Johnnie; what div ye pay tae gang in?"

"I'm shure I dinna ken. But see, there's a big man sittin' there, shurely he'll be able tae tell us."

"Whaur is he?" quo' Kirsty.

"There he's, sittin' tae yer left haund gaun in."

"Oh aye, him wi' the white waistcoat on."

"The very same."

"That'll be the maister," quo' Kirsty; "losh, he's an awfu' big man."

"Hoots, that's naething tae be wondered at," quo' Johnnie,

"a' thae kinna showman bodies are big. We'll awa' in an speak tae him onyway, an' if he says it's worth the seein', we'll gang in an' see't."

The reader will be aware, (that is to say if he or she has ever visited Macleod's) that sittin' tae the left haund as ye enter, is that notorious swindler—else much-to-be-pitied—Sir Roger Tichborne; an' will also observe that Johnnie an' Kirsty are under the impression that this wax mould of a most infernal scoundrel or most unfortunate claimant is the owner of the waxwork himself, Mr. Macleod. Let us follow them in and hear how they get on in addressing this wonderful personage.

"It's rather a guid kin' o' a mornin'," quo' Johnnie.

"Good morning, sir," replied a wag from behind the model.

"It is that, man," quo' Johnnie; "we were jist thinkin' o' gaun in tae see the affair. Is't onything worth?"

"Quite sure you will be highly satisfied, sir. Just step in, pay to the young lady at the office."

"Weel, thank ye the noo, then. We'll maybe see ye when we come oot."

"All right, sir; I'll be here, sir, I'll warrant you."

"There then, my lassie, there's a saxpence—that'll pay for us baith."

"Thank you. Go up these steps, push open the door, then you are into the first flat."

"This wee stair here?"

"Yes, sir."

"O, aye, it's a' richt then, my lassie. Oh, what a lot o' brow folk! this canna be the place shurely."

"Ye wad think no, but this is where the lassie sent us."

"You are all right," replied two visitors.

Kirsty she began tae look aboot her quite bewildered, an' remarked tae Johnnie in a whisper—"They folk that passed

us the noo were jist makin' a fuil o' us. We'll be shure tae be puttin' oot. Div ye no see," continued Kirsty, lookin' at the model o' the great reformer John Knox, "that we're intae an English Kirk. See, there's the minister gaun awa' tae marry thae braw folk."

"This way, Biddie, my darling, till I show you the ould heretic that destroyed all our beautiful Cathedrals."

"I say, wifie," quo' Johnnie tae this auld Irish dame, "what's up that there's sae mony braw folk here."

"Where?"

"There—look,"—pointin' to the models.

"Bless your innocent sowl, sur, these are the wax models of men and women that are dead and buried long before your ould grandmother was born."

"An' are they a' deid?" inquired Kirsty.

"Well, no, not all, there's Tichborne all alive and kicking yet, and there's Dr. Kenealy, and let me tell you, that the Dr. will either bring the claimant out of Dartmouth prison or else he'll be in beside him soon, one of the two. Och shure, there's plenty of living monuments, as ould 'girling face' that preaches on the green talks about, in here. Look, there's one, Henry Ward Beecher."

"An' wha's thae twa staunin' aside him?" inquired Johnnie.

"That's the woman that thinks more of him than she does of her own husband, or else they never would have been here. Do you moind that now; an' look at that ould heretic over there, John Knox. Bad scan to him. He can light his pipe wid the tip of his finger now."

"He can dae naething o' the kind," put in Kirsty. "My faith, if John Knox had been leevin' there wad ha'e been a hantle less o' your kind aboot Glasca, ye auld limmer that ye are. It's down on the green beside auld 'girling face' you should be."

"John Knox—bad luck to him and all his followers. He destroyed all the beautiful Cathedrals in the country. That's what he called tearing down the nests to let the rooks fly away, but devil an inch they flew after all, and you'll find them more plentiful now than ever. And now, mistress, I'll just ask you one question—what good did it do his ould destructive spirit to destroy all those magnificent buildings?"

"Jist because they were in the way, an' whenever they were tumbled doon folk began tae see a better road tae heaven, than gaun through your Papish purgatory."

"That's jist the way na'; we've nae time tae staund an' argue, Kirsty, my doo," put in Johnnie.

"Be my sowl she's a fine looking dove; like as not she's the one that flew awa' from Noah's Ark and never went back again."

"Oh, ye needna lauch at me, ye auld limmer. I could dae you onyway."

"Maybe you could. Good morning to yous both. I hope you may get drownded or you lave Dunoon."

"Aye, isn't that an auld warlock, Johnnie; did ye hear her about the dove never returnin, an' it flew back wi' an olive leaf in its neb."

"Weel, Kirsty, ye ken the proverb, 'Convince a man against his will, he's of the same opinion still;' an women are jist as heid-strong every grain. Sae there's nae use arguin' wi' ony o' her kind. Losh, whaur is a' the noise comin' frae?"

"It's the monkeys upstairs, sir," observed a gentleman.

"Come on up an' see the puggies, Kirsty. Mind yer feet on the stair noo."

"Losh, what ugly brutes! nae wonder Darwin's theory is unpopular."

"*I daursay you're richt, Kirsty. There's ane lyin' in that*

cage jist about deid wi' age, an' I could wager ye a croon that there's no' a bit o' odds on't, except a wee thing bigger an' a wee thing uglier, an' aulder tae be shure, since the day it was born. An' hoo the mischief ony body can believe that weel-faured faces like yours an' mine, Kirsty, were ance as ugly's they, maun hae a michty queer taste for puggies, that's a' I'll say. But, losh, it's time we were movin' tae the Broomielaw."

Sae doon the stairs they cam', an' Johnnie walks up tae the supposed Mr. Macleod, an' says he, "I like yer waxwark fine, man ;" an' drawin' oot his jaunty bottle, says, "will ye tak' a bit taste?"

"I say, man, that's naeboddy," cried a wee laddie at the door.

Johnnie saw through his mistak', an' flew oot o' the place, Kirsty an' him never lookin' ower their shouthers till they were safely on board the boat for Dunoon.

"O, Johnnie, what wad you an' me dae if this big ship was tae sink?"

"Droon, tae be shure, unless ye could soom like a juck."

At this stage Johnnie thocht he saw a kent face, exclaimin' at the same time, "Guid gracious alive, Donal M'Lean, is this you? Whaur are ye gaun, whaur ha'e ye been, an' hoo are ye leevin'?"

"I am gaun tae Millport, I was at Glasco wi' three score o' ta pest sheep that ever left ta Highlan's. Is tis your teerie that'll pe with you?"

"Yes, yes, man. I say, Kirsty, this is Neil M'Lean's faither. See, tak' a bit taste ; there's nae mistak' this time."

"Well, well, here's to ta wife of Shon Mathison, an' my ponnie laddie, Neil ; God bless him an' all ta Mathisons."

"Sae be't, my auld hearty ; I'm real gled I've faun in wi' ye. You'll be able tae tell us aboot the places as we pass."

"O yes, tares Tumparton Castle, where ta Pruce an' ta Wallace an' ta M'Gregors fecht ta English like ta very tival."

"An' what place is yon, Donal?"

"Yon'll pe Greenock, ta pig seaport. All ta ships on ta sea come to Greenock. Tit you'll not know tat?"

Thus they crackit till they reached Dunoon, when Johnnie an' Kirsty bade Donal guid day, syne sauntered aff tae the auld Castle Hill tae ha'e a seat an' a crack.

"Speak tae me, Johnnie, can ye no."

"Oh Kirsty, I'm jist thinkin'."

"What are ye thinkin' about?"

"I'm thinkin' aboot Byron an' the ocean."

"What does Byron say aboot it, Johnnie?"

"He mak's the ocean oot an image o' eternity—Listen, Kirsty :

'Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean, roll—
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore ; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own :
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.'

"Oh, Johnnie, but that's grand poetry. But oh, it's deep, deep."

"The depth o' the author's subject, Kirsty—as deep as deep can be ; as high as heaven, Kirsty—as high as high can be. Think o' a' the streams, an' burns, an' mighty rivers that gang rolling tae the sca, an', the moment that they touch the waves, are waisted oot o' human sicht into the bosom o' the mighty deep."

"But, Johnnie——"

"Whisht awee, Kirsty, or I'm dune—think o' a' the bairns gaun friskin' tae the schule, an' their frolics on the playground, an' the minglin' o' their voices, seem like the bonnie burns that jink roon mony a turn, an' loup their rocky beds, an' rush adoon the dell, an' murmur 'mang the trees, jist sighin' tae embrace their stronger brither smooth an' deep, an' hastenin' tae the sea."

"But, Johnnie——"

"I'm no' dune yet na."

"But I dinna see through what you're meaning."

"Weel, Kirsty, we're a jist floatin' on the tide o' time, or what as Shakspeare ca's 'a sea of troubles,' the end of whilk is death, that wafts us tae the ocean o' eternity; an', like the streams, an' burns, an' mighty rivers when they touch the sea, are seen nae mair unless by Him who made us. Time an' tide——"

"Hillo, Bob, what boat is yon coming this way?"

"Yon's the boat we cam' doon wi'. Gore, Kirsty, haste ye tae the pier, an' I'll follow. Yon's oor boat coming."

Sae doon Kirsty ran, jist in time tae catch the boat. The gangway was pushed on tae the deck and the crood rushed on board. Kirsty dreamtna but her Johnnie was amang the lave. She saw the big beam begin tae move, the paddles splash, an' then—oh then!—a voice cried, "Kirsty, are ye there?"

Kirsty lookit roon about, an' roon about, but nae Johnnie could she see.

"Kirsty, Kirsty—oh, for guidness sake, Mr. Captain, stop your boat, or else send Kirsty back."

Kirsty looked back tae the pier, and, as shure as anything, beheld her ain deserted husband staundin' roaring a' his pith, and a crood o' gaping loons around him.

It was Kirsty's turn next, an' sic lamentation an' weepin'—

no weepin' either, but roarin' an' gaun on—never was seen or heard tell o' sin' the days o' Noah. Here is something like the size o't—

"O, my puir Johnnie Mathison, left in a foreign part wi' no' a leevin soul tae speak tae—waur than Robinson Crusoe. What am I tae dae! O, that heartless wretch o' a captain, tae sail awa' an' leave him there! The Lord is shure tae punish ye for this, ye black-lookin' vagabon'. If I had had Rover here I wad ha'e jumpit oot o' your blasted auld ship. O, if I had kent what I ken noo, I never wad ha'e left the Holms," &c., &c.

The captain was staundin' at the wheel, an' bein' a guid-natured sort o' chiel, he put the gless tae his e'e, an' sees the "Iona" leavin' Dunoon pier wi' Johnnie Mathison on board. Sae he chapit doon tae the engineman tae lessen the speed o' the boat, an' let the "Iona" pass. After daein' sae, he comes doon tae Kirsty, an' I'm blest if she wasna gaun on far war than ever, tearin' her hair, an' springin' about like a cat that had swallowed a bawbee's worth o' mustard.

"Bless your soul, woman," quo' he, "what are you making all the fuss about?"

"Dinna speak tae me or I'll spate ye, ye cruel-hearted wretch that ye are; div ye no see what ye've dune."

"It's all right, woman; see, there's the "Iona" and your husband aboard of her."

"Whaur is he, whaur is he?"

"Kirsty, are ye there?"

"Oh Johnnie, will ye no come oot o' that ship aside me; see how they're a' lauchin at me."

"By the livin' hairey, if I could win ower tae them I wad gi'e them something tae lauch at."

I wish the reader had seen the pantomime. Baith boats

in perfect consternation, the captains lauchin' like tae burst.

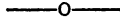
A wag in the steerage cryin' a' his pith, "Kirsty, my doo," an' anither in the cabin, "O dear, O dear, Johnnie Mathieson." If ever ony o' my readers gang doon the length o' Dunoon, either in the "Iona" or the "Rothesay Castle," jist speir at the captain, an' he'll tell ye a' aboot it.

In conclusion, let me say that Johnnie an' Kirsty met on the Broomielaw, fondly embraced ilk ither, hurried aff for the train, landed safely ance mair at hame, an' frae that day tae this a' has been comfort thegither; but ne'er a word o' gaun back tae Dunoon. Johnnie's noo an elder o' the kirk, an' the Rev. Maister Grant hisna forgot his promise on the marriage nicht—tae ca' an' see them occasionally.

THE END.

POEMS AND SONGS.

POEMS AND SONGS.



TO A FRIEND.

Fain would I here disclose thy name,
For who has played a nobler part,
And weave some laurel to thy fame ;
For never did the muses aim
To praise a kindlier heart.

Still, be it as thou hast desired—
Unknown to all save thee and me,
But were my every line inspired,
My every word with wisdom fired,
They'd glow in warmth to thee.

A kindly word has soothing wings :
But who can grasp the word, and say,
It from my aching bosom wrings
A weight of sorrowing care that clings,
And bids it flee away.

A kindly deed to one in need—
The proverb has it better still :
“A friend in need's a friend indeed”—
Will ever be the truest creed,
And words unflinching will.

How can my spirit then refuse,
Since thou hast been all this to me,
The rustic promptings of the muse,
That gives me no one else to choose,
But dedicate to thee.

THE PULPIT AND THE PRESS.

Sandy—'Inower man, John, hoo's a' the nicht ?

Draw close up tae the fire, man ;
 An' sit till I get started richt
 Tae tune my rustic lyre, man.
 And syne we'll crack and lilt in rhyme,
 'Bout wonders o' the age, man ;
 An' maybe, John, if we ha'e time,
 Oor crack nicht fill a page, man.

John—I ha'e a subject on the roll,

Though deep I must confess, man—
 Whilk's dune maist guid for mind or soul,
 The Pulpit or the Press, man ?
 But I'm inclined tae think the Press
 Is candidly the best, man ;
 The Pulpit, I'll maintain, 's dune less—
 Let's put them tae the test, man.

Sandy—Weel, I'm certain that you're wrang,

But argument's the thing, man,
 That waukens truth up wi' a bang,
 Gars lugs o' error ring, man.
 There's Calvin, Luther, and John Knox,
 And Doctor Chalmers tae, man,
 And Bunyan, Wesley, Whitfield, Fox—
 Just tak' a look o' thac, man.

It's no the Pulpit, but the men,
 Of course you'll understan', man ;

But logic nonsense whiles cries ben,
Tae gi'e debate a haun, man.

John—I ken a' that as weel as you ;
But, Sandy, jist look here man—
It's time aboot,—an's my turn noo,
This question I will speir man—
Hoo was't you cam' tae ken o' a'
Thae great men ye ha'e named man ?
The least o' them you never saw,
Tho' a' are highly famed man.

You'll find you're neither mair nor less,
Altho' you're feared tae hint it,
Indebted wholly tae the Press,
For a' you've read was printed.
But let us jist compare the men,
An' I will let ye see man,
Ae editor's worth preachers ten,
Sae jist haud on awee, man.

A kirk micht haud a thousand folk,
An' a' thae folk be there, man—
A sample o' the kintry's stock—
Some sittin' glowrin' at the clock,
The sermon is sae puir, man ;
There's no an editor wad gi'e
Sic naked things the air, man.

Jist tak' the papers in your haun,
Religious, moral tae, man,
The far best preacher in the lan
'S *the Press*, I'm bound tae say, man.

For ae ten thoosan' in a kirk
There's twenty thoosan' oot, man,
Whose minds an' souls get mony a jirk
That we ken nocht aboot, man.

And a' because the glorious Press
Is spirit o' the age, man—
Clothed in a literary dress
Flits o'er this world a "stage," man,
Gi'ein' warnin's tae the reckless mind,
And prospects that are grand, man ;
And articles, when a' combined,
Display the Almighty's haun, man.

The Pulpit is a gift from high,
The Press is ane an' a', man ;
And Press, I'll say, withoot a sigh,
'S the best gift o' the twa, man.

Sandy—O, John, that's fearfu', fearfu' work,
Fair sacrilege complete, man ;
You seem maist fearfu' in the dark,
And for you I could greet, man.
I'm sure the deevil in ye lurks—
His views you've just expressed, man ;
Man, think o' C. H. Spurgeon's works,
Your editors we'll test, man :

What editor in a' the land
Wi' Spurgeon could compare, man ?
And frae his pulpit words sae grand—
There's aye conversions there, man.

John—But stop a wee, I'll let ye see,
While a' at Spurgeon stare, man,
There's aye reporters, twa or three,
Wi' phonographic lear', man ;
And if it wisna for the Press,
And yon chiels sittin' there, man,
The world would ken a hantle less
'Boot Spurgeon's gifts sae rare, man.

But losh, there's editors a lot,
If I could only name, man—
There's Russell deid, but no forgot,
Deserves as muckle fame, man.
He's gane wi' laurels tae the grave,
His spirit soars abune, man,
An' noo he's blest wi' a' the lave,
Whose work on earth is dune, man.

Yes, editors deserve our praise—
This world was but a blink, man,
Until they set the blink ablaze,
Wi' paper, pens, and ink, man.
And still that literary blaze,
Shines bright's the sun at noon, man,
Dispelling superstition's haze
That lurks the mind aroon, man.

But, losh, the nicht is wearin' late,
An' faith, I'll ha'e tae gang, man ;
An' as I rise tae tak' the gate,
I hope there's naething wrang, man.

Sae, guid nicht, Sandy—I'm awa',
 Tae part guid friends I'm fain, man ;
 But still the Press the Pulpits draw—
 They couldna staun their lane, man.

Sandy—Weel, John, guid nicht, you're maybe richt,
 You see my mind's no stinted ;
 Put tae the test we aye judge best
 O' a' that's said—when printed.

BEACONSFIELD.

An emperor may raise a man to rank,
 And kings and queens place subjects near the throne ;
 But neither power a genius has to thank,
 Who soars aloft through merits of his own.
 His haughty compeers laughed—they listen now,
 The “Jew” has topp'd the high cliff of the realm ;
 Still bitter envy looks up, wondering how
 He reached the goal, and steers the British helm.
 Steer on, triumphant in thy honoured height !
 An envious crew has never made thee yield ;
 A nation's love is centred in its might—
 Thou art its centre, dauntless Beaconsfield ;
 Long may the sons of Britain tread thy ways,
 Long may her daughters seek to sing thy praise.

SUCH IS THE MAN.

Give me the man who holds his nation up,
And will not let another pull it down,
Whose brawny hand, with patriotic grip,
Holds high his Queen, and guards with pride her crown.

Such is the man whose praise I seek to sing,
Nor will I cease, despite the bigot crew
Who stand aback, ne'er dreaming, as they fling
Their little splore pearls on him as the dew.

'Twas his to "bear the whips and scorns of time,"
'Twas his—undaunted, upward, and alone,
Until he reached a more congenial clime,
And raised pre-eminent the British throne.

True dignity is his who knows the right,
And will not shrink though despots sound alarms;
But trusts in God, arraying all his might,
Defeating bloodless with the call "to arms."

I love the dauntless spirit of the man—
His wealth of wisdom poor ambition jeers ;
I love the race he so triumphant ran,
And who can match the genius of his years ?

O Thou from whom all nations' gifts must flow,
Whose matchless power guards heaven, earth, and sea ;
Keep Britain's throne secure from every foe,
And raise up men to serve as well as he.
Who fear no foe, enriched by heaven's smile,
Their faith in thee—their bulwarks round our isle.

IN MEMORIAM.

The Right Hon. the EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, Died 18th April, 1881.

What means this mourning over land and sea,
Our ships are draped, our armies softly tread;
Our sovereign mourns—long live Her Majesty—
Alas, alas, Lord Beaconsfield is dead.
Ah! he has gone, the spirit of an age,
Who lived to gild the glory of our might,
The noblest actor ever trod the stage,
To grapple with the foes of England's right.
Come, spirit come, who raised the British throne,
A guiding star be still to Briton's sons;
Where, where the light shone brighter than thine own
Or at thy years produced "Endymion's;"
Or where the chief so noble and so brave—
Whose greatest rival sought to deck his grave.

Squibs on Midlothian Election, 5th April, 1880.

“THE HEART O’ MIDLOTHIAN.”

Air—“You needna come wooin’ tae me, auld man.”

“O wha wadna laugh at their capers, young man?
 Like auld maidens fashed wi’ the vapours, young man,
 We ha’e turned them adrift
 To their very last shift—
 That’s puffin’ the Radical papers, young man.”—*Hogg*.

The Heart o’ Midlothian is good, auld man,
 But spurns at a Radical rude, auld man;
 Sae you needna come here,
 She’s aware o’ your lear,
 An’ your lingo, sae cheatin’ an’ lood, auld man.

Her heart’s in the “kirk,” an’ her e’e, auld man,
 Still, tae win her you micht mak’ a lee, auld man;
 But whiles you get fou
 Wi’ verbosity’s dew,
 Sae her honest heart canna but dree, auld man.

She caresna for flatterin’ cracks, auld man,
 Nor yet for your tree-felling axe, auld man;
 Be this aye her rule,
 Jenny Geddes’ stool,
And this she will never relax, auld man.

The Heart o' Mid Lothian is stern, auld man,
O' this you ha'e something to learn, auld man ;
 Three cheers for the earl,
 This noble young carl,
Wha's wed tae this spirit o' darin', auld man.

There's a terrible cry aboot brains, auld man,
They're gane gyte 'mang your Radical weans, auld man ;
 She admits you've your share,
 But you've naething tae spare,
For on oor side supremely it reigns, auld man.

I'll gi'e you a toast o' my ain, auld man—
May your powerful ambition to rule, auld man ;
 Reign years nine or ten
 O'er the wood o' Hawarden,
Where you'll prate tae nae pooers but your ain, auld man.

HE IS COMING.

He is coming, he is coming,
All is ready for the show,
The pantomimic house is up—
The Gladstone house, you know.
There are candles by the thousand
To illuminate the scene,
And Radicals turned animals
To draw their god's machine.

He is coming, he is coming,
Know his lordship will be there ;
And the greatest lubricator,
If in trim, will take the chair,
And all the little gods of light
Who shine at Addiewell :
What a glare in the chair
Keeping charge of the stell.

He is coming, he is coming,
You'll be offered two to one,
In favour of the southern grey,
Whose wind for running's done.
But whose backers' wealthy wisdom,
Full of speculative sway,
Will give two to one on Gladstone—
Come away, come away ?

He is coming, he is coming,
Hear the bands of music play,
See the blazing of the bonfire,
And the arches span the way.

See West Calder's own Millennium,
 See West Calder's greatest day;
 And the Ex-Premier prevaricate
 When "Knox" stands in his way.

We all would like to hear him,
 But we are not coming down,
 'Tis a Radical-like money-making,
 Charging half-a-crown.
 If we all lived at Dalmeny,
 We might swagger, we might vaunt,
 But we'll speculate a penny
 On next morning's "Courant."

UP AN' RIN AWA', WILLIE.

Up an' rin awa', Willie;
 Up an' rin awa', Willie—
 Midlothian lads are jist the lads
 O'er whilk you're sure tae fa', Willie.
 There's Adam, wi' his honey mou';
 And Cockburn Street has "Eve," Willie;
 An Cowan's creel has held the diel
 Wha tempted tae deceive, Willie:
Chorus.—Up an' rin awa', Willie, &c.

"Seraphic Ralph" is just a calf,
 Wha bays when cracks the "whip," Willie;
 An' Peddie's power's a greedy glower,
 An' fain yon "crown" would grip, Willie;
 You'll see at length miscounted strength,
 When ye come doon will fa', Willie:
 Gif ye be wise, tak' this advice,
 An' up an' rin awa', Willie.
Chorus.—Up an' rin awa', Willie, &c.

Her nainsel has tae motion lait,
 Frae Cuthpert's committee, Willie :
 She'll want ta create pig pamphlets mate
 Tae stuff their prains a wee, Willie ;
 Ta creat Mackenzie is ta man,
 T'at wants tis horn tae plaw, Willie ;
 Sae noo's your chance, tae route an prance,
 An' Beaconfield misca', Willie.

Chorus.—Up an' rin awa', Willie.

Bulgaria's Prince is here the noo ;
 It's like you're sure tae ken, Willie,
 That he's nae thochts o' seein' you,
 At least about Hawarden, Willie.
 Atrocities ha'e a' blawn past ;
 I'll tell ye wha he saw, Willie—
 His lordship; and his lordship classed
 The best man o' the twa, Willie.

Chorus.—Up an' rin awa', Willie.

Gif he had cam' and you had served
 The nation and the croon, Willie,
 He'd seen a wee bit army starved,
 An' navy broken down, Willie ;
 But now he sees a mighty power,
 Wha has nae Russian awe, Willie,
 An's fit tae snap them ony hour
 They touch the lion's paw, Willie.

Chorus.—An' this he'll tell tae a', Willie,
 That you may rin awa, Willie,
 Midlothian lads are jist the lads,
 O'er whilk you're tae fa', Willie.

A LILT FRAE A LAYMAN.

Ye reverends, W. D—— and B——,
Just listen, I'll gi'e ye a lilt o' my ain—
It's nae sin on Sunday for three holy men
To sing to the air o' the "Laird o' Cockpen :"
"Theology's worried us a' to the bone,
Sae we've got a new theme—e'en Willie Gladstone ;
A loftier subject than Peter or Paul,
O yes, we will worship him rather than all."

The first means to "throw up his hat in the air,"
The second at qualified voters will stare,
The third "in his mind's eye" will fiddle, ochone !
To the tune, "You had better keep wide-a-wakes on."
For a body, you ken, micht get cauld in his heid :
But then there's the Doctor—aye, doctor, indeed,
Wha weaves a' his speeches wi' Radical en's,
And whose hair's as weel poothered's the Laird o Cockpen's.

Lord Hartington—faggots for more let us pray,
But down with the earl's, or lost is the day ;
The U. P.'s and Frees are responding, "Amen,"
But they'll a' be clean duped like the Laird o' Cockpen.

TO MAGGIE.

Maggie, charming, sweet, and fair,
I will sing to thee, lassie ;
Blue-eyed queen, wi' golden hair,
Young heart kind and free, lassie.
May the lad wha comes to woo ye
Ha'e a heart will fondly lo'e ye ;
Better far he never knew ye,
Gin it wer'na sae, lassie.

Maggie, tak' an honest man,
Be he rich or puir, lassie ;
Honesty's the only han'
Can "drive awa' dull care," lassie ;
Better far a humble dwelling,
Where there's truth in freedom swelling,
Than the mansion o' a felon
Stowed wi' worldly gear, lassie.

I've written this advice in rhyme,
I hope you'll learn to lilt, lassie,
An' yet say, "Weel I mind the time
I on its merits built," lassie.
An' whether married—aye, or single—
At e'en, in comfort roon the ingle,
I hear you lilt this rustic jingle,
I'll feel as prood's yoursel', lassie.

UNCO LANG ABOUT IT.

SONG.

Jist listen tae an auld maid's sigh,
 That leeves her lane sae eerie,
 An' thinks that a' the lads are shy,
 'Cause nane will be her dearie.
 I wish that John wad marry me,
 Fu' oft his breeks I've clootit ;
 But, Oh ! I doot it's no tae be—
 He's unco lang about it.

Chorus.—You're unco lang about it, John ;
 Oh, how I sit an' weary ;
 An' wish you'd put your plaidie on,
 An' come an' be my dearie.

Oh, dae ye min' when first we met,
 Wi' hearts as licht's a feather,
 And how ye said you'd ne'er forget
 My wee cot 'mang the heather ?
 Oh, come awa', you've noch tae fear,
 But come and never moot it ;
 Alane I'm sittin' sighin' here—
 You're unco lang about it.

Chorus.—You're unco lang about it, &c.

You ken there's nane here but mysel' ;
 The nichts are dark an' dreary,
 An' Boreas whistlin' doon the dell—
 Oh, John, but I am eerie.

The ingle-side fu' snod I keep,
Sae come, an' dinna doot it ;
Then fareweel sighin' through my sleep—
You're unco lang about it.

Chorus.—You're unco lang about it, &c.

Sae John threw on his tartan plaid—
Nae langer he wad tarry,
But crossed the moor, an' in he gaed
An' made the match wi' Mary.
Tho' promised lang he kept his word,
Tho' mony years 'twas dootit ;
But noo the wee cot has its lord,
An' bairnies play about it.

Chorus.—Let promises aye come tae pass,
Deceivers a' uprooted,
If e'er ye promise, tak' the lass,
Tho' unco lang about it.

THE WEE COT THAT STAN'S IN THE GLEN.

Come, lassie, an' wander wi' me at the gloamin',
 'Wa' doon by yon wee cot that stan's in the glen,
An' saft thro' the woods tae the burn we'll gang roamin',
 An' there, on its green banks I'd fain let ye ken,
How oft by the ingle I've found mysel' eerie,
 Though plenty o' gear I ha'e baith but an' ben ;
But what are they a' wantin' you, my ain dearie,
 Wha brichtly wad licht up my cot in the glen.

Oh listen, hoo blythe the wee birdies are singin',
 And see hoo the burnie is loupin' along ;
A' nature seems happy, while true love is clingin'
 Aroond a fond heart that has cherished 'it lang.
Oh, say you'll be mine, and I'll lo'e ye for ever ;
 Oh yes, she has answered the truest o' men ;
Sae noo they are happy, and "dull care" has never
 Shown face near the wee cot that stan's in the glen.

ODE TO ALMOND WATER.

Hoo mony pranks alang your banks,
I've played when I was wee :
There's nane can tell, except mysel',
The pleasure ye gied me.

An' noo I feel my heart wad steal
Back tae yon sunny days ;
I'll let it gang, and sing a sang—
Ye weel deserve its praise.

You're no sae wide as bonnie Clyde,
But dearer far tae me ;
I'll plicht my faith, I tak' my aith,
Tae lo'e ye till I dee.

Wi' richt guid will, I've had my fill
O' wadin' tae the knee,
The troots tae watch and minnows catch,
That aften jinket me.

'Mid sunny rays I've stripped my claes,
An' in your waters clear,
Gane ower the heid, an' aft indeed
Your depths I used tae fear.

Thae days are gane, but O, I'd fain
Gang back an' start anew ;
But, bonnie burn, they'll ne'er return,
An' sae they're jist like you.

OOR FIRST LESSON IN SMOKIN'.

Twa airy birds, we baith were herds,
That liket ane anither ;
Noo, div ye see, this lad an' me,
Were neighbour herds thegither.

Weel, we twa snipes baith had oor pipes—
An' me—a wee bit nacket—
But, div ye ken, we baith were men,
Because we smok'd an' crackit.

An', by the bye, while baith oor kye—
The time that we were smokin'—
Gaed 'mang the corn, as shure's yer born
We didna care a docken.

It fair cowed a' ye ever saw,
An' really was provokin',
Tae think we'd sit, an' smoke, an' spit,
An' see the fences broken.

But when the reek made us twa sick—
A sickness waur than ony—
We'd lie an' row doon ower yon knowe,
Puir me an' my wee crony.

An' syne we'd bock fair like tae choke—
We wrocht for't, 'twas oor earnin' ;
Believe you me, baith big an' wee
Fin's this oot in the learnin'.

EPISTLE TO JAMES THYNE, ESQ.,

GREENHILL GARDENS, EDINBURGH.

I hope that you will pardon me
For takin' this bit liberty,
In writin' thus to you.
But aye the thocht rins thro' my min'
I'd like tae serve wi' Maister Thyne,
Sic thocht's, Sir's, naething new.

When I was a wee steerin' chiel,
'Bout ten years auld, I mind ye weel—
Though noo I'm twenty-five :
Then in your shop ye lauched tae me,
An' aye a saxpence ye wad gi'e,
That's kept sic thochts alive.

But, Sir, thae days are past an' gane,
O' warld's cares then, Sir, I'd nane,
But 'deed I'll no compleen ;
It's best, nae doot, tae be content,
We canna bring back siller spent,
Nor be what we ha'e been.

But to my task—and, Sir, I trow,
You'll wonner what is comin' noo,
And so dae I mysel' ;
But gi'e me jist anither line,
'Tae mak' it clink wi' Maister Thyne,
And syne my task I'll tell.

My dear auld faither, Sir, ye ken—
I think him jist the best o' men :
 He thinks the same o' you.
Oft wi' his heavy-laden'd pack,
He's come tae you an' had a crack
 'Bout payin' what was due.

Weel, here his son comes next tae ask
A job frae you ; a pleasant task
 Your work wad be tae me.
I'd lilt and write oot mony a sang,
I'd happy be the hale day lang,
 An' that ye sune wad see.

The beauties o' auld Edinbro' toon,
Wad fill wi' poetry my croon,
 An' that's jist what I want ;
An' often ye wad see my face
Up at the kirk in Bristo Place,
 Tae hear dear Maister Grant.

I ha'e been travellin' near a year
For Webster, he's a clothier here—
 An honest, upright man.
But he and I's about tae pairt,
Sae I intend tae come your airt
 As sune as e'er I can.

O, Sir, your town I dearly lo'e ;
The world has toons, but they are few,
 Wi' scenery sae grand.
The twinklin' stars, the silvery moon,
Wi' clear blue sky, mak's Edinbro' toon
 Jist like a fairy land.

Ae nicht like this, when a' was still,
I stood upon the Calton Hill,
The bonnie sights tae see ;
'Tween heaven's stars like ornaments,
And a' your braw toon monuments,
They fair enchanted me.

Although the nicht was rather late,
Yon lion-lookin' Arthur Seat
Seemed tow'ring tae the sky ;
In dazzling splendour, Princes Street
Stood glittering far beneath my feet ;
I ne'er was up sae high.

The Castle, wi' its sodgers a',
Jist looked as if 'twas gaun tae fa',
But sic a thocht wad mock ;
It's stood for generations there,
'Twill stan' for generations mair—
It's built upon a rock.

But, Sir, you'll maybe think it's time,
For me tae stop this wee bit rhyme,
And bid sic thochts adieu ;
But, Sir, I hope you'll no think this,
For rhyme tae me is jist like bliss—
I aye could start anew.

But here the way I mean tae close ;
I am a tailor you'll suppose,
You, maister o' a shop.
You need a man—jist send for me,
I'll leave Coatbrig wi mirth an' glee—
Sae here the muse maun stop.

A WOODLAND SCENE.

Aneath this aged beechen tree,
Whose branches kiss the limpid stream,
I feel as if from care set free,
Or wakened from some heavenly dream.
I hear the lark far in the blue,
I hear the mavis chant sae sweet,
And see the wagtails taste anew
The sunlit waters at my feet.

How rich the golden rays dart through
The budding branches overhead ;
Hail ! radiant beams, old nature woo,
And wake the flowerets from the dead.
The bluebells springing by my side,
The gowans strewed across the lea ;
Aye deck the green fields like a bride
That smiles to welcome heaven's decree.

But I must leave this beechen tree,
And wander to my lowly cot ;
But Oh ! this scene's brought joy to me—
May kindred scenes ne'er be forgot.

FIRESIDE REFLECTIONS.

O, but I lo'e, when my day's work is through,
A bit crack roon a cozy fire en';
It brings me in min' o' the days o' langsyne,
An' the auld-farrant tales I heard then.

An' whiles I wad fain gang awa' back again,
An' start on life's pages anew ;
An' keep them sae clean, that nae blot wad be seen,
An' as fresh as sweet summer's May dew.

Yet it's richt we should try a His ways to come nigh,
Sae I'll ask Him to help unbelief ;
Though I canna gang back to yon fireside to crack,
He can help me to turn a new leaf.

A DREAM.

I stood upon a golden shore,
And gazed upon the moonlit sea ;
And Oh, the sweet breeze with it bore
The sound of voices rich and free.
Oh, how my heart leapt with the sound
That floated through the midnight air ;
With joy and fear I gazed around,
But saw no minstrels there.

What could it be? I looked again,
And there beheld a glorious sight—
An angel harper led the train
Of heaven's minstrels robed in white.
No discord in their plaintive song,
No tear-drop in their lighted eye,
But there to welcome 'mong their throng
Believers when they die.

EPISTLE

TO THE REV. SHOLTO CAMPBELL DOUGLAS,

After listening to his Sermon from the text, "Come, for all
things are now ready."

Welcome, herald of the Cross,
Accept my thanks for last nicht's teachin',
This country-side is at a loss
For lack o' last nicht's Christ-like preachin'.

All things are ready for ye here,
Sae preach the dear redeeming story,
That makes the peasant and the peer
On equal ground press on to glory.

Nae odds it mak's 'tween Jew or Greek,
Or lord or duke—Jehovah sees us ;
And if through Christ we pardon seek,
We find we're a' alike in Jesus.

I'm proud to think that such as you—
Of noble birth and high position—
Can preach so plain the Gospel through :
Yon clears the mist—oft brings decision.

Accept my humble thanks again ;
To hear you oft yon same truths urgin',
I'd listen to you just as fain
As though you had been C. H. Spurgeon.

THE ROSE OF SHARON.

Written while the Rev. J. M. HEWSON was preaching from the same
subject—Coatbridge, 7th November, 1875.

Its fragrance fills that sweet abode,
Whose dweller looks with faith to God ;
It oft removes a mighty load
Of pains and woes,
And cheers us on the heavenly road,
This lovely rose.

Despite the venom of its foes,
Their choking thorns and fiendish blows,
Divinity it did disclose—
They could not kill ;
And in our memory it grows,
And blossoms still.

O, fairest flower in earth or heaven,
Let more of thy perfume be given ;
And may thy enemies be driven
From Eden's bower ;
And evil from our souls be riven
By thee, sweet flower.

A LOVER'S WOOING.

Beside yon lake, where goddesses adorn,
And woodlands, rich with foliage, hail the morn,
With sweetest lays tuned by the feathered throng,
Where clear the brook winds merrily along,
I strayed one long, fair, sunny summer day,
Well pleased, I ween, that nature looked so gay ;
But gayer still untold—a loving pair,
Who came to woo 'mid scenes enrapturing there ;
No affectation in each other's praise
I heard them sing, though rustic were their lays,
And knew 'twas truth, whose golden genuine ring,
Flies false pretention on its flattering wing.
And thus they sang beside the limpid stream :
I listening lay, all glorying in the theme :—

HIS SONG.

Come a' ye sterlin' wooers
Wha ha'e lassies o' your ain,
Aye, an' a' ye lo'in' lassies
Wha deem love the greatest gain,
An' I'll tell ye o' my Jeannie,
Wha I meet wi' morn and e'en,
Singin' nae love's like your ain love
By the sweet Killindean.

Chorus.—By the sweet Killindean,
By the sweet Killindean ;
Singin' nae love's like your ain love
By the sweet Killindean.

Awa' wi' false pretention,
May ilk honest lassie dree,
Gi'e me the love that means it,
And its owner's heart for me ;
Thus I know, and feel, and feast upon
The honest heart o' Jean,
Wi' her smilin' an' beguilin'
By the sweet Killindean.

Chorus.—By the sweet Killindean,
By the sweet Killindean,
There's a heaven in her wilin',
By the sweet Killindean.

There's oor Johnnie an' oor Jessie,
Wha've been wed this mony a year,
An' aften ha'e I heard them tell
Their coortin' a' was here ;
There's nae wonder they're aye happy,
Woody amid this woodland scene,
Charmed wi' nature and her minstrels
By the sweet Killindean.

Chorus.—By the sweet Killindean,
By the sweet Killindean ;
'Tis both Artwood, aye, and Hartwood
By the sweet Killindean.

'Twas Jeannie now who tuned the rustic lyre,
And sang responsive to a heart's desire ;
He loved to hear her—sweetly could she sing—
Her voice was clear, and made the woodlands ring.

HER SONG.

Sing on, sing on, my a', my ain ;
Since first we met gaun up the causey,
You've been to me the greatest gain,
And I to thee the truest lassie.

Chorus.—Then let us sing beside the burn,
'Mang wild flowers on its banks sae grassy ;
An' every morn an' e'en return
Tae meet my Joe, an' Joe his lassie.

There's mony ups an' doons in life,
There's mony Joes an' Jeans fu' saucy ;
Though fifty years I'd leeve your wife,
I'd hear ye sing my ain true lassie.

Chorus.—Then let us sing beside the burn,
Where rests the lake sae clear an' glassy ;
An' every morn an' e'en return
Tae meet my Joe, an' Joe his lassie.

There's love an' lear' in a' we see,
There's singing birds 'mang foliage massy,
The very lavrock, mountin' hie
Sings, welcome Joe, an' Joe his lassie.

Chorus.—Then let us sing beside the burn,
The day we first met on the causey ;
An' every morn an' e'en return,
Tae meet wi' Joe, an' Joe his lassie.

Thus revelling fondly in each other's love,
Pure as the stream, it flowed as from above,
No discord marred, their love lays were as true,
As ever lovers sang who meet to woo ;

And joyously I heard the lovers say,
To-morrow ushers in our wedding day.
And many years have passed since then, I ween,
Still flows their love as pure's the Killindean.

THE AULD KIRK.

Oh, the auld kirk, the auld kirk,
Oor bield sae lang an' true ;
But we maun lea' the auld kirk
For shelter in the new.
Tho' loth tae pairt frae ties sae dear,
That leal hearts fondly lo'e,
Still aye we'll mind the auld kirk
When sheltered in the new.

Oh, the auld kirk, the auld kirk,
Twa centuries and mair
You've been a faithfu' auld kirk,
Tho' noo your wa's are bare.
But doon the brae we a' maun gang
When auld and dune like you ;
Still, aye we'll mind the auld kirk
When sheltered in the new.

Oh, the auld kirk, the auld kirk,
Fu' mony's blessed the day
They worshiped in the auld kirk,
An' learned tae sing an' pray ;
But we maun pairt, as a' maun pairt
Sae, sacred bield, adieu ;
Still, aye we'll mind the auld kirk
When sheltered in the new.

OOR AULD KIRK'S FIRST AND LAST SERMON.

Specially Addressed to U.P. Elders and Managers.

Through a' Wast Cauther's doots and fears
I've battled this twa hunner years ;
But noo king Alcohol appears,
And bids defiance,
Wi' a' his spirits' fiendish jeers,
And damned alliance.

Fu' often on his fort I've gazed,
That elders o' a kirk have raised,
Whose affectatious hopes are based
On a' things holy :
Nae wonder that I am amazed
At siccan folly.

O' a' the ills, I ken nae worse
Than this infernal traffic's curse ;
That empties body, soul, and purse
O' a' that's needed ;
Lord stay the elders wha wad nurse
This fiend, and feed it.

Hoo could a kirk haud up its face,
Gif jail birds filled the deacons' place,
Wha should ha'e mair o' heaven's grace
Than drink's dire profit ;
Alas ! 'tis true some, gif ye trace,
Are leevin off it.

Lord, gi'e us a' the thing we need—
Be't sober ministers and creed—
That drink's supporters we may weed
Oot o' the session ;
Till then we ne'er can look for speed
In gospel mission.

It's like Wast Cauther bodies a',
Are thinkin' noo I crouselly craw,
That's stood sae lang in speechless awe
'Midst foes alarmin',
An' just when I am like tae fa',
Begin a sermon.

Weel, weel, whatever ye may think,
Before my wa's in ruin sink,
I'll cry for ance against the drink—
The Church's foe,
That drags its members o'er the brink
O' endless woe.

Ne'er lend your aid to what has hurled,
Sae mony tae anither world,
Wha ance unconsciously were earled
In some drink den.
Let temperance banners be unfurled,
Amen, amen.

FIRESIDE WITCH STORIES.

Ae cauld winter nicht an' auld wife sat tambourin',
Three laddies aroun' her bit ingle sat coorin',
An' doon frae the dark clouds the rain it was pourin':

Just pictur that nicht wi' this auld body's tale—
A terrible tale aboot bogles an' witches,
Wi' lang girmin' faces, an' big squinty mutches,
That tried tae get laddies like us in their clutches,
Syne far ower the sea tae an island wad sail.

Then we three wad glower, an' wad dunch ane anither,
But ne'er a word spak', though I couldna but swither,
An' think what a shame tae tak' weans frae their mither,
To that horrid island sae far ower the sea ;
An' jist at the time this auld body was speakin',
I've seen the hale three o' us up the lum keekin',
For fear some auld warlock was hidin' there sneakin',
A' ready tae pounce doon on some o' us three.

But noo, to be candid, an' finish up ceevil,
Sic cracks aboot warlocks, an' witches, or deevil,
Is ane o' the warst—deed it is the warst—evil
That ever humanity learnt to dree.

WILLIE BRYCE'S VAN.

Losh, I canna help frae thinkin',
Hoo in secret laddies ran,
Round about the corners jinkin',
Straucht to Willie Bryce's van.

In we crawled, and told our stories,
Smoked oor pipes, or sung a sang,
Ne'er a thocht o' what's before us,
A' seem'd richt and naething wrang.

Willie was as mild's a Quaker,
Simple-minded wee bit man ;
"Cash" had started him a baker,
"Tick" had tumbled o'er his van.

Willie's failure we thocht toppin,
Hoo could we be sorry for't,
When his van at e'en was open,
What were parlies wantin' sport.

Jist when a oor pipes were reekin,
And o' cantrips had enough,
Wha stood roon the corners keekin',
Ready for oor lugs to cuff.

Faither, mither—hear the squeelin'—
O, I'll never do't again ;
Hear the truth oor fauts revealin',
See oor pleasure turned to pain.

SWEET KILLINDEAN.

Sweet Killindean, sweet Killindean,
Enraptured is my heart I ween,
A "sheltering shade," a "leafy screen,"
 Art always nigh,
As wimpling through a woodland scene
 You onward hie.

A maiden loves thee, so do I,
As on thy soft green banks I lie,
And hear thy waters gurgling by
 Her humble cot ;
Inspiring sound that draws me nigh,
 Forsakes thee not.

Thy living, lyric, limpid song,
Thy mystic music soft or strong,
Ne'er fails to keep me musing long
 As in a dream ;
'Tis heaven to hear the feathered throng,
 Beside thy stream.

The little minstrels love to near
Thy tempting brooklet sweet and clear ;
O would that all our course could steer,
 Both morn and e'en ;
Uninterrupted, like that dear—
 Sweet Killindean.

A REPLY TO "ONE FOR LEAP YEAR."

"All that I want's a gentle heart,
 To beat in unison with mine ;
 Then 'twould be joy to bear a part
 Through all life's changes wrought by time."—" *Mag.*"

I'm ready for a wife, Mag—
 You're no tae tak' the rue ;
 An' since you've advertised, Mag,
 I think I'll jist ha'e you.

But first send me your caird, Mag—
 I'd like tae see your face ;
 I houp your yellow-haired, Mag,
 An honour tae your race.

Can ye wash, an' bake, an' sew, Mag ?
 Hoots, certainly you can :
 Or else I'm sure that you, Mag,
 Wad ne'er ha'e socht a man.

"D. Canning" wants a wife, Mag,
 But let him lie his lain—
 Or let him gang tae Fife, Mag,
 An' seek ane o' his ain.

But here's a health tae you, Mag,
 Before I drop the pen ;
 If ye ha'e lots o' wealth, Mag,
 You'll shune get lots o' men.

FAR OWER ILL TAE PLEASE.

(In reply to one desiring a perfect wife—height, five feet six inches.)

A poet wants a perfect wife,
And for her he has advertised—
But if he gets her they are rife,
That's a' I'll say, and be surprised.

If he's as guid's the ane he wants,
I'd croon them baith "the perfect pair ;"
A match for a' the Bible saints,
That ever sprang from Eden fair.

But "Eleve's" far ower ill tae please—
An honest-hearted thrifty lass,
Wi' half his soucht-for qualities,
For him, as weel as me, wad pass.

But, faith, I doubt yon maiden's lost,
Gin ye should find her get her haund,
And then you will, wi' truth, can boast
The best five feet six in the lan'.

A WORD TO THE AMOROUS POETS AGAIN.

“If you’d make love in stanzas poetic,
 Many people your lays may admire ;
 But the *Mail* is too unsympathetic,
 And will put your soft songs in the fire.”—
Marion Bernstein.

I think that the editor’s gey an’ sair tried
 Wi’ lovers that write, but should wait till they’re cried,
 And married and kirked—and then a’ their life,
 Let them sing to the praise o’ their husband or wife.
 For noo it’s jist havers the maist that they tell—
 ’Twad fit them far better to keep to theirsels’ ;
 I’d rather be progged wi’ a big roosty nail,
 Than rhyme ower my courtship to folk through the *Mail*.

I’m sure it’s a blessing to baith lad and lass,
 A lot o’ their blarney the *Mail* winna pass :
 For gin it should pass ’twould gar them think shame,
 And wish they had kept their love-letters at hame.
 But here’s a bit thocht that I mean to suggest :
 Jist ca’ a bit meetin’, and a’ dae yer best,
 To start a bit newspaper ca’d “Flower o’ Dunblane,”
 Get Marion tae edit, syne pass through yer ain.

JOCK'S PLAN FOR RAISIN' THE WIN'.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

Ae mornin' Jock gaed tae his wark,
 But O! his heid was in a muddle,
 For he had pawned his very sark,
 An' six weeks had been on the fuddle.

Weel, on the road a chiel he met,
 As dry as Tam o' Shanter's cronie,
 Wha had been leanin' ower a yett,
 But left his post tae meet wi' Johnnie.

"Weel Jock," quo' Jamie, "is this you—
 Whaur is't you're gaun, and ha'e ye siller?
 Man, last nicht I got awfu' fu'
 Alang wi' Tam an' Jamie Miller."

"If I could jist but raise the win,—
 Man, think ye, could we get a bottle?"
 "Weel, Jamie, if you've ony tin,
 You'll sune get what'll slake your throttle.

"For me, I ha'ena got a ring,
 You never met a drier weaver;
 But, Jamie, here's the very thing—
 Gif you'll pretend you've ta'en the fever.

"I'll carry you up on my back:
 It's no that far tae yon big farm;
 If you'll let on the thing's a fact,
 We'll raise the win', or else alarm."

“Gore, Jock, that is a noble plan,
Sae here I go tae start the moanin’;
An’ swear that you’re a wearied man,
While I’ll continue aye the groanin’.”

Sae tae the farm the dodgers gaed :
Jock swore his burden was nae charmer ;
While groanin’ Jamie doon he laid
Jist richt fornent the guid auld farmer,

Wha speered fu’ kindly for the man—
That leevin’ Jock swore was a weaver
That he got lyin’ on his lan’,
An’ nearly dead wi’ typhoid fever.

An’ Jock continued, “as for me,
I’m like tae drap, altho’ I’m willin’
Tae carry him across the lea,
If you’d but gi’e the man a shillin’.

He’s needin something for support,
Unless you want tae see him deevin’ ;”
The farmer slippit something for’t,
For death the pair auld man was dreein.

Then said tae Jock—“noo lift him up,
An’ tae the doctor’s gang like hairie,
An’ see an keep a guid firm grip—
He’s no an easy load tae carry.

I’ll better yoke the horse an’ cairt,”
“No, no,” quo’ Jock, as fly as ever :
“*I’ll cross the parks, I ken the airt,*
You’ll find that I’ll be there fu’ clever.”

Sae ower the fields the weaver loons,
When oot o' sicht coontit their siller :
The fever plan brocht twa half-croons—
They drank wi' Tam an' Jamie Millar.

COURTIN' AT KENNEDY'S LAND.

Sic smackin', and crackin', and noises they're makin'—
I ne'er heard the like o't sin' e'er I was born ;
In fact it's no or'nar—the deil's in oor corner,
And keeps up the sport wi' the lassies till morn.

They come frae some airt wi't,
But here they maun part wi't,
And siccan a partin', it pleases them gran' ;
'Tween blessin' and kissin',
And winkin' and jinkin',
I'm thinkin' they a' dae the best that they can ;
They'd saved this bit clinkin',
If they had gane linkin'
A wee bittock back frae Kennedy's Land.

LINES TO MR. JOHN BLACK,

EASTHANDAXWOOD.

Lang look't for's come, and I suppose
It's no the first you've penned in prose,
 O' guid auld hamely Doric ;
I think as muckle o' that style
As Pat thinks o' the Emerald Isle,
 Or Hamlet thocht o' Yorick.

I'm gled ye lik't yon hamely screed,
For mony a time I've clawed my heid,
 An' thocht I micht din't better ;
An' wondered whiles if Johnnie Black
Wad ever twa-three meenits tak'
 Tae answer "Robin's" letter.

The muse seems stationed near the Breich,
An' tho' ye say your wark's been dreich,
 You've gi'en her time tae laden
Your mind wi' sweet thochts, and at e'en
She leads ye tae a "woodland scene,"
 Or, better still—yon maiden.

Gi'e prompt obedience tae the muse,
Where'er she leads ye, ne'er refuse—
 You'll get some o' her treasure.
An' tho' ye leave your faither's ha',
When wint'ry winds drift deep the snaw,
She'll whistle tae the winds that blaw,
 An' gi'e ye deepest pleasure.

LOVE AND LIGHT.

Bright, bright is the moon, shining down o'er the moorland,
And sparkling and pure is earth's mantle of white ;
Where, where is the heart that would sigh 'tis a poor land,
While heaven's great orb lights the darkness of night.

Sweet maid of the moorland, why sit there and ponder,
What saddens thy bosom 'mid splendour so bright ?
She answers, "'Tis dark here ; but far away yonder,
Afloat on the ocean's, my own love and light.

What joy can nature give—dear prospects blighted—
Or what is the pale moon or pure snow to me,
When dark retrospect sees the night that I plighted
Fond love to my sailor lad far o'er the sea ?

Sweet maid of the moorland, thy fond heart is ever
The anchor of truth and the harbour of love ;
I've come o'er the ocean, to part with thee never,
Till death steers our frail bark to mansions above.

O William, dear William, farewell to my sighing ;
Let's here, on the jewel-crested, beautiful snow,
Thank Heaven for meeting ; and ever till dying,
Oft here, through the moonlight, in dreams I will go.

WHEN SUMMER DAYS ARE LANG.

When simmer days are lang again,
An' lav'rocks in the lift,
An' bonnie daisies deck the plain—
Auld nature's fairest gift,
I'll gang and sing a canty sang,
Beside the wee white burn,
For there I've strayed—in young days played,
But ah ! they'll ne'er return.

When simmer days are lang again,
An' blossom on the trees,
An' flowers that mak' the hearts sae fain
O' honey-laden bees,
I'll hie awa' tae yonder spot,
Where Annie met wi' me ;
There plighted faith was sealed aneath
Yon bonnie hawthorn tree.

When simmer days are lang again,
Wee birdies in their nest,
A' nature's choristers in reign—
The lark, king o' the rest ;
I'll listen tae their music sweet,
Beside auld Eppie's stane,
And beat the time in rustic rhyme,
And mingle in their strain.

When simmer days are lang again,
The leafy clover seen,

And Heaven sends sweet showers o' rain
To damp earth's mantle green,
I'll gang an' read frae nature's book,
And Heaven's Bible tae,
And prize them baith, and ask mair faith
From Him we got them frae.

WE'LL AWA' TAE TORBANEHILL.

We'll awa' tae Torbanehill,
Where the blaeberries grow ;
O, I lo'e the plantin' still,
Wi' its heathery knowe.
Youthfu' scenes—aye cherished dear—
Fain my heart again wad steer,
'Cross the Almond Water clear,
Tae auld Torbanehill.

We'll awa' tae Torbanehill,
Where the wee linties sing,
And the mavis by the rill,
Mak's the sweet woodlands ring.
O! the thocht o' yon auld knowe
Kin'les love intae a lowe,
That I fain again wad row
Ower at Torbanehill.

We'll awa' tae Torbanehill,
Where my Annie and me
Ha'e gane linkin', by the mill,
Tae yon hawthorn tree;

Where the lav'rock soared above,
 Chantin' strains that woovers love,
 While in Eden we wad rove
 Ower at Torbanehill.

We'll awa' tae Torbanehill,
 Where the blaeberries grow ;
 O, I lo'e the plantin' still
 Wi' its heathery knowe.
 May its owner ever feel—
 Near the spot I lo'e sae weel—
 Mony joys, rich and real,
 Ower at Torbanehill.

TO THE ROBIN.

Wee Robin, I lo'e ye—my crumbs I am due ye,
 For singin' that bonnie and plaintive wee sang ;
 Your music keeps swellin' sae sweet roon my dwelling,
 That echoes back sympathy a' the day lang.

I'm prood aye tae see ye, an' fain wad I fee ye,
 Tae sing in a bonnie wee cage on the wa' ;
 But auld mither nature's opposed tae this feature,
 An' rather you'd sing 'mid the drift an' the snaw.

Wee Nellie an' Johnnie cry " Ma', ha'e ye ony
 Wee crumbs for the Robin?—we'll put them oot there,"
 Sae come tae the window, an' there ye will find aye
This Scriptural truth—bread enough, and to spare.

FU' CHEERIE IS THE INGLESIDE.

Fu' cheerie is the ingleside,
Fu' couthie is my Ann,
Three hale and healthy bairnies,
And I a happy man.
Gin thrift attend the weddin',
The gem o' every bride ;
Wi' health and work we've plenty,
Roon a cheerie ingleside.

Fu' cheerie is the ingleside,
Wee Jessie on my knee ;
Compared wi' kings and princes—
What better they than we.
Wha listen tae ilk ither,
Oft list and no confide ;
But faith an' love's thegither,
Roon a cheerie ingleside.

Fu' cheerie is the ingleside,
The sicht wad gled ye a'—
A wee queen wi' a peveral,
A wee king wi' a ba' ;
A smilin' wife an' bairnie :
O'er a' the world so wide,
• I canna find an equal
Tae my cheerie ingleside.

WEE NELLIE AND JOHNNIE.

“As the auld cock craws the young ane learns.”—*Old Proverb.*

There's oor wee Johnnie wi' his pipe,
 An' oor wee Nellie cryin' dinna ;
 But yet he'll do't, the ancient snipe,
 While she'll mask tea in her wee tinnie.
 Oh what a pleasure they gi'e me,
 My bonnie wee auld farrant bairns,
 They try tae smoke an' mask the tea—
 “As the auld cock craws the young ane learns.”

Her wee doll has a Grecian bend—
 Jist see hoo snod its face she's washin' ;
 An' Johnnie trys his blouse to mend,
 While Nellie imitates the fashion ;
 I'm sure they twa are fair diverts,
 Aye in the fire as mony airns ;
 Proofs o' the proverb that asserts—
 “As the auld cock craws the young ane learns.”

Wee Nellie tries tae sing a sang,
 Wee Johnnie blows his penny whistle ;
 O may my laddie whistle lang,
 My lassie sing like “Jessie Russell.”
 And noo tae parents let me say,
 Be carefu' aye before your bairns ;
 What's said they'll say, what's dune they'll dae—
 “As the auld cock craws the young ane learns.”

A LILT TAE THE AULD CAMERONIANS.

Suggested by the Union of the Reformed Presbyterian and Free
Churches in 1876.

I was trained frae my youth tae this auld fashioned creed,
That a Cameron never could yield ;
But faith, I can tell ye, I scarted my heid,
When I saw them retreat frae the field.

O where is my grandfaither—guidness alive !
Had ye heard him when doon on his knees :
Hoo the auld Cameronians ever wad strive
To advance and keep clear o' the Frees.

Established, an' U.P.'s, an' Methodists tae,
An' Baptists, an' E.U.'s, an' a',
Had broken the fence, an' like sheep gane astray :
The Established ran under the law.

Was't the Scriptural law—na, the law o' the land,
The apostles ne'er dreamed o' ava ;
An' the ithers, puir souls, they had na a hand
Tae guide them, sae doon they wad fa'.

O grandfaither, look frae the windows on high,
An' wonders on earth you will see ;
Dour Pharoah's lean cattle, I'm pleased tae ca' kye,
Ha'e been swallowed clean up wi' the Free.

A THOUGHTFU' LADDIE.

It happened jist the ither day,
 As twilicht had begun,
 A thoughtfu' laddie stopp'd his play,
 Tae look where set the sun.

He stood an' gazed a guid lang while,
 Wi' pleasure beaming in his face,
 Syne cried oot wi' a happy smile,
 O! what an awfu' bonnie place.

Weel, weel, thinks I, jist tae mysel',
 It's thoughtfu' bairns like you we need ;
 An' wha, my laddie, wha can tell
 But what there's something in your heid.

The sun has sunk—'twill rise the morn ;
 An' so I trust will you some day ;
 For maybe, laddie, ye was born
 To lighten up some darkened way.

MY ANNIE AN' ME.

I'll sing tae my dearie, wi' heart licht an' cheerie,
 An' sit doon ance mair 'neath the hawthorn tree ;
 'Twas there I first met her, an' love's golden fetter
 Tied heaven's ain knot roun' my Annie an' me.

Her heart wi' love's lowin'—she's fair as the gowan
 That spring brings tae licht on the bonnie green lea ;
 Nae wonder I lo'e her—there ne'er was a truer—
 We're happy thegither my Annie an' me.

I'll ever protect her, an' mair than respect her,
An' sing tae her praise till the day that I dee ;
Should you an' anither e'er join baith thegither,
I wish you as weel as my Annie an' me.

WEE JOHNNIE'S LINTIE.

Wee Johnnie's bird's fu' brisk the day,
But, puir wee man, he's wan an' weary ;
An' no a word he's fit tae say,
An' heeds na dickie's sang sae cheerie.

Still flaps his wings, an' loup, an' sings,
Aye, brisker far this day than ony—
An' omen that there's better things
Than death at this time for wee Johnnie.

For days and weeks, when weel an' trig,
His cry a' day, e'en through the gloamin',
Was "bring me my wee bird frae Coatbrig',
O, faither, gang for't—will ye no, man?"

His auntie Jeanie brocht it here—
It's wee cage by the window's hingin' ;
But Johnnie sees nae wee cage there,
Nor hears his birdie sweetly singin'.

I'll trust the Lord may raise him up,
Make him again baith blythe and sturdy,
Tae play his ba', an' crack his whip,
An' chorus tae his ain wee birdie.

LINES ADDRESSED TO MRS. WARDROP,

U. P. MANSE, WEST CALDER,

For her kindness in inquiring about my boy's health—26th April, 1879.

Madam, my bairn seems better,
The tender Shepherd's been,
Unbound the troubled fetter,
And led to "pastures green"
His ain wee lamb, my Johnnie—
All glory to his name—
The sweetest 'mong ten thousand—
To trusting souls the same.

There's balm in Gilead ever,
The Great Physician's there,
Still He's the gracious giver,
Still He has balm to spare;
And every true believer,
Who seeks His aid divine,
Will be a blest receiver
As I have been with mine.

The muse my soul's inspiring,
What else, mem, can it be
But this, and your inquiring
So kind and Christianly
For Johnnie; thanks, dear lady,
Your sympathy I lo'e,
I'll ne'er forget such aid, aye,
Whatever else I do.

A WEE BIT SANG.

A wee bit sang I'll sing the nicht,
It's best for ane that's cheerie O!
It helps tae mak' ane's spirits licht
That threaten whiles tae weary O!

The bairns baith ha'e cuddled doon—
Are innocently sleepin' O!
An' washed sae clean frae sole tae croon,
Are snug in heaven's keepin' O!

An' look jist at my clean fireside,
An' hoo my wife is smilin' O!
The 'oors at e'en do sweetly glide
Past nature sae beguillin' O!

But hark! I think my dearie's wrang
While I'm her charms adorin' O!
She's spraged the wheel wi', "Stop yer sang,
It' no this in the mornin' O!"

Before I stop, I wish them weel,
Wha gi'e my sang a readin' O!
An' houp they'll aye ha'e lots o' meal
An' never want for cleedin' O!

UP ON DADDY'S KNEE.

Bonnie Jessie, sweet wee Jessie,
Wi' the sparklin' e'e ;
Ever cooin', ever wooin',
Up on daddy's knee.
Hoo I lo'e your e'en sae blue,
Plump roon face, an' wee sweet mou' ;
Look again, my lamb, an' coo,
Up on daddy's knee.

My smilin' wean, beguillin' wean,
Loupin' fu' o' glee ;
I ne'er can weary wi' my dearie,
Up on daddy's knee ;
Jist as clean's a siller preen—
O thae gled bewitchin' e'en—
Dearest wean that e'er was seen
Up on daddy's knee.

Heaven bless ye, let me kiss ye,
After that wee prayer ;
Jessie's sleepy—where's her creepie ?
There's her cradle there ;
Sleepin' noo's my ain wee doo,
Far aboon the lift sae blue ;
May kind angels watch you through—
Better guides than me.

LOSH, PRESERVE US A'.

'Twas grandfaither that learned me
This dear auld Doric phrase,
When he'd come in at e'en tae see
The bairns get aff their claes,
An' mither a' oor fau'ts wad tell,
An' me a loon wad ca',
He'd say ye was a loon yoursel'—
But, "Losh preserve us a'."
The weans are young, an' sae was I,
Aye keep in mind o' that ;
They'll a' turn wiser by and by—
But what is Sandy at ?
I'd ta'en his crummy stick in haun,
The pendlum strikes the wa',
An' mither rins tae kep the knock
For fear the knock should fa'.
While grandfaither he tak's his smoke,
And gi'es his heid a claw ;
Then next I knocked a picture doon,
'Twas hingin' on the wa' ;
An' syne his dear auld quiverin' voice
Cries "Losh preserve us a'."
O'd save us, weans, I'll ha'e tae gang,
The nicht is wearin' late ;
An' mither she wad say "my sang,"
I canna bid ye wait.
Jist look at young wretch again,
Before ye gang awa',

He's speel'd up tae the dresser heid,
 To get his gutty ba',
 But, "Guid nicht—dinna lick the bairns,
 'Twill dae nae guid ava,
 Jist ask for them a better grace—
 The Lord preserve them a'."

A HAMELY SANG.

Come, come, my bonnie bairnie, an' lay by your toys a wee,
 Let mammy pu' your booties off, syne up on daddy's knee;
 You're ready in a jiffy—losh, I hinna waited lang,
 For the dearest, sweetest, subject o' a hamely sang.

I often think there's something in your wee bit curly heid,
 An' aften pray the world may see't in word, in work, or deed;
 The wisest men we ever saw wi' toys were ance as thrang
 As you, wee prattling subject o' my hamely sang.

There are pleasant paths before ye; aye, an' rough an'
 thorny ways;
 There's a wail o' sin an' sorrow, an' a soun' o' lastin' praise;
 There's twa roads tae leave this warld by, mind—the richt
 ane an' the wrang—
 Keep the richt ane, is the motto o' my hamely sang.

Ah me! my bairnie's sleepin' soun', an' kens na what I sing,
 Still frae the portals o' the blest there comes on airy wing
 Some guardian angel, whom I pray, may guide where'er he
 gang,
An' keep him to the motto o' my hamely sang.

DIALOGUE.

"I am deeply interested,"
Quo' Tam Robb tae Geordie Blaw,
"That oor Parliament's say pested
Wi' a cless seemed born tae thrav.

Naething's richt—be't Whig or Tory—
Wha wad seek some guid tae dae,
Aye some Parnell-Dillon story,
A' tae cause the House delay.

Irish bills and Land League meetings,
Bouncin' Boers and Afghan din,
Fearfu' gulfs, and foreign greetin's,
Bradlaugh bauchell'd oot an' in.

Hoo wad ye propose tae settle?—
Gi'e the Irish first redress,
Deil kens what the bodies ettle
Frae a House in sic a mess.

Gladstone sighin', John Bright cryin',
Forster grabbin' here an' there ;
Rag-tag-bob-tail raves defyin',
A' their wisdom, power, an' lear.

Is there ocht in British history,
Tae compare wi' siccan' times ;
Landlords murdered, a's a mystery,
Wi' thae damned agrarian crimes.

Flesh an' bluid can stan't nae langer ;
 Geordie, what are we tae dae ?
 English pluck an' Scottish anger
 Cannot tolerate delay."

"Losh man, Tam, the thing's past daein',
 But I'll tell ye what I'd dune,
 Parnell, for his Yankee bayin',
 I'd ha'e lang syne 'run him in.'

He's the heid an' front's offendin',
 Ower the seas he gaed tae blaw ;
 He's a Protestant pretendin',
 But a Jesuitic craw.

Eighteen-Eighty saw him landed
 Far across the western seas,
 Boovers an' 'Barks' he quickly banded
 Irish sufferin' tae release.

I was there the day before him,
 Heard the crackin' o' his whip ;
 Saw the rebel myths adore him,
 As he tried tae raise them up.

Heard my shop-mates brag an' blether—
 Irish Dutch, baith high an' low,
 French an' Spaniards a' throuither
 Land Leagued for oor overthrow.

Telt them o'er a glass o' lager,
 Wearied o' their Parnell raves,
 That they need nae longer swagger—
Still Britannia ruled the waves.

An', quo' I, wi' a' yoor leaguin',
 Where's the true-born Yankee in't ;
 What care they for your intriguin',
 They're on oor side firm as flint.

Death to landlordism, cry they,
 Everlasting cry forlorn,
 Die this nicht—nae sooner die they,
 Than ten thousand claims the morn.

Ignorance—what blessin' screens it—
 Cut your country tae kail yards ;
 Death tae landlords—Lord what means it ?
 Rabbit hooses have their lairds.

What a meaningless delusion,
 What an ass wha raised the cry ;
 Oot the Hoose wi' sic confusion,
 Hold their Parliament oot by."

"Yon's the thing, I tell ye, Geordie,
 I'd been ready at the quay,
 Nabbed this great Land Leaguin' lordie,
 For his schemin' ower the sea.

Yon was jist the time tae end it
 And tae stay a nation's broil—
 Gif the laws maun be defended,
 Clap the lawless i' the jail.

But there's something else I'm mad at,
 That I want your breath upon :
 'Tis thae Boors, by George, I'd haud at,
 Let them fin' ' Domn'd Englishmon."

Yes man, Geordie, I've been thinkin',
For the sake o' England's name,
They deserve a proper clinkin'—
General Roberts thocht the same.

Or he ne'er had sailed tae meet them,
Ne'er his war attacks had plann'd,
Or wi' thunderin' volleys greet them,
Nor his forces would he man'd.

Off he sailed, our dauntless daring—
Bravest of the bravest men—
But a silly-willy glarin'
Called our hero back again.

England's fame and England's glory—
'Whistle o'er the lave o't' noo,
Till the Premier turns a Tory,
Bids his Liberal fears adieu.

See thae handfu' Boors defy us,
Spreadin' discord roun' an' roun';
Why a nation's richt deny us—
Liberty tae knock them doon.

Roberts tae the Transvaal hasten,
Is oor brethren's cry in vain;
Hear yon Scottish voice—O, listen!
"Will ye no come back again?"

But I doot he'll ne'er gang back, man,
Though his heart be e'er sae fain,
Till the Tories, in a crack man,
Hold the reins o' power again.

MEETING OF RATEPAYERS WITH THE WEST
CALDER SCHOOL BOARD,

IN THE OLD U. P. CHURCH, 31ST MARCH, 1876,

(A RHYMIN' REPORT.)

The nicht, when stappin doon the street,
I heard a voice cry, "Stop a wee!"
I stood, an' heard, "The Board's tae meet—
Come on up tae the auld U. P."

Sae up I gaed wi' my auld frien',
An' Calderwood was in the chair;
Sae, Maister Editor, I mean
Tae rhyme 'bout some things I heard there.

It's no a verbatim report,
For that's a thing I couldna gi'e:
An' weel ye ken I'm no the sort
That kens oucht o' phonographee.

I'm jist a plain auld workin' man—
But had I wisdom tae afford,
I'd tak' Wast Cauther by the han',
An teach the members o' the Board.

You'll no guess what the Chairman said,
Referrin' tae ane Maister Grant;
O, hoo I wished tae lend my aid,
An' stop what I considered cant.

This Maister Grant's a candidate—
O, Calderwood, it wasna fair
Tae say if Grant wad get a seat,
He'd like the last Board "once" be there.

Says Grant, "The last Board I was in,
It wasna like this Board ava ;
Parochial squabbles ne'er were dune,
Sae that's what kept me aye awa."

But whether Grant gets in or no,
I dinna think he'll muckle care ;
But this I'm certain o', he'd show
A better spirit in yon chair.

On Bible teachin' in the schule,
The Chairman spoke jist a' his pith,
An' after he had spak his fill,
Up started honest Maister Smith.

The Chairman tried tae snub him doon—
But yon's a member o' the Board
That has a something in his croon,
An' weel deserves tae be encored.

At sixty meetin's he's been there,
An' only four times been awa :
'Twas twice when lichtnin's bleezed the air,
An' twice kept back wi' drifted snaw.

Syne Maister Miller he proposed
A vote o' faith in the auld Board ;
The Chairman said, "The meetin's closed,"
An' sae I whispered—thank the Lord.

EPISTLE TO THOMAS BARR, ESQ.,

After pleading on behalf of puir "JOCK WEIR."

By the ingle here I'm sittin',
Musin' ower my last bit rhyme,
Wishin' whiles I hadna written,
Hopin' oft it was nae crime.

Puir Jock Weir is in his glory
Since he's gotten back his hens ;
Wi' your leave I'll tell the story,
And for boldness make amen's.

'Twas in Europe's grandest city
I forgathered wi' Jock Weir,
Listened to his tale wi' pity
That I mean to let you hear.

"Man," quo' Jock, "is this you, Sandy ?
Dood, I'm trumlin' on my legs ;
Man, it's terrible unhandy
Wantin' hens and guid fresh eggs."

What a pityfu' disaster
For a rhymer to rehearse !
Jock insisted, to his master
I should write yon pleadin' verse.

If you thought the lines offensive,
Certainly I would be grieved ;
But the muses thoughts defensive
Must have vent until relieved.

Noo I'll close this short epistle,
 Cravin' blessin's on "Harburn;"
 Lang may Jock Weir sing and whistle,
 Never more again tae mourn.

Hoping that your family ever
 May have health an' lots o' gear ;
 And the neighbourhood for ever,
 Bless the day the Barrs came here.

EPISTLE TO MR. ANDREW TERRIS,

On the occasion of his Marriage—27th February, 1879.

Accept this rustic rhyming gingle—
 What tho' it mak' your ears play tingle,
 It seeks your weel aroon the ingle,—
 E'en a' your life ;
 May fortune wi' you baith aye mingle ;
 Here's tae the wife.

'Tis strange that strangers oft forgather,
 And meet tae ha'e an antrin blether,
 When, lo ! the matrimonial tether
 Weaves roon the heart,
 Then knits the ane, an' syne the ither,
 That's ill tae pairt.

My wife's compliments I send ye ;
 May lots o' love and luck attend ye,
 "Angels and ministers defend" ye
 Frae worldly care ;
 And routh o' a' the joys I've penn'd ye
 Be aye your share.

ACROSTIC.

Just one little song the muse must sing—
 Ever have I found her music sweet—
 Nature makes me to her garments cling,
 Nature makes me worship at her feet ;
 Ere we part, my cousin, come with me—
 Tuning by the way to join her melody.

Ask me any favour while I live,
 Look to one who's learned to woo and win,
 Love has tokens manifold to give ;
 All I ask thy bosom from within,
 Now to take this loving token in.

THE QUARRY HOLE.

There cam a native o' the place,
 Wha had been lang awa', man ;
 I wish that you had seen his face
 When Wast Cauther he saw, man.
 He glower'd doon at the Quarry Hole,
 Syne claw'd his heid an' said, sae droll—
 That architects, upon the whole,
 Wad bang the deil an' a', man.

Quo' I, as I was passin' by,
 That's Maister T——'s hoose, man,
 And what's yon poll for up sae high ?
 Yon's for a flag o' truce, man.
 And, Lord, it's time it was unfurled,
 He should gi'e in—it beats the world—

Or doon the rabble should be hurled,
Jist like the very deuce, man.

And what are a' thae doo cots there?
Hoots, they're assembly rooms, man,
Where bonnie lads and lassies fair
Gae dance and crack their thooms, man.
But Bella John does aye advise
Tae stay at hame and sell the pies;
And O! her diamond sparkling eyes
His very soul illumes, man.

Aweel, quo' he,—aboot the hoose
(Nae mair 'boot "sparkling eyes," man)
You'll maybe think I'm crawin' cruse,
But, dod, it's sic a size, man.
It's like some garrison in Spain:
Is Cauther fear'd she's tae be ta'en,
And wants a fortress o' her ain,
Invaders tae surprise, man?

Quo' I, of late I've heard it said
Wast Cauther Volunteers, man,
The Quarry Hole meant tae parade,
And open't wi' three cheers, man.
But sic a thocht I canna thole,
Should Boreas e'er approach the Hole,
Wi' death in Co. he'd ca' the roll,
Then smoor oor volunteers, man.

WHA?—A CONTRAST.

Wha can girn, an' brag, an' flyte,
Ower her neighbours crusely craw,
Barkin' aye, and fain wad bite—
Crabbit, spitefu' Leezie Shaw.

Wha focht maist when at the schule,
'Bout her geerin' aye wad blaw,
Lee, and ca' the maister fool—
Crabbit, spitefu' Leezie Shaw.

Wha stuck middle in the class,
Ower the ithers made this law :
If they'd daur to trap an' pass,
They wad catch't frae Leezie Shaw.

Wha has aye a pleasant face,
Lo'es her neighbours ane an' a',
Sister o' a better race—
Thrifty, gentle Mary Shaw.

Wha was kindest at the schule,
Whiles gi'ed a' her piece awa',
Ne'er was kent tae dae ane ill—
Thrifty, gentle Mary Shaw.

Wha has made the far best wife,
Wha's maist honoured o' the twa,
Wha will live a happy life—
A' that lives like Mary Shaw.

“REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARKS
WHICH OUR FATHERS HAVE SET.”

We love the ancient landmarks well
That guide us o'er the ocean waves;
When Papist winds the waters swell,
Our landmarks are the Martyrs' graves.

This sea of troubles we'll sail through,
Tho' foes may spout their frothy spray;
Reflection sees John Knox anew,
The reformation marks our way.

King William guides our noble helm,
Calvin instructs a daring crew,
And Luther cries, who'll overwhelm
Sons of the Orange and the Blue.

We fear not despot tyrant knaves,
Our chart's the glorious Book divine;
And landmarks, towering 'bove the waves,
Are Derry, Aughrim, and the Boyne.

Who can forget the direful past,
When rack and thumbscrew, knife and fire,
Rose wailing shrieks upon the blast,
Thus died the noble Christian sire.

But thro' those dark clouds beam'd the sun,
That lighted up a glorious day;
Kind Heaven had the fight to win—
So landed William at Torbay

Our liberties he did restore,
Our prince a king began to reign,
Then Papist fury on the shore
Was hurled back on the angry main.

From Heaven's guide we will not part,
But grasp it firmly to a man,
Though *Pio Nono* lightnings dart,
Or thunders from the Vatican.

'Twould only be pretentious din,
'Twould fear debasing priestly fools,
But not those who have entered in
To Wycliffe, Knox, and Calvin schools.

Those landmarks let us still revere,
That guide us by the Papal host.
And stand like shining lights to cheer
Us through the dark and dangerous coast.

MILLAR'S CORNER.

The first two verses by request—the other to the bargain.

Men or women wantin' dressed,
Ca' at Millar's Corner,
There are bargains o' the best—
Cheaper far than or'nar ;
Shawls, an' plaids, an' bonnets braw—
Man, your wife adorn her ;
She'll be the brawest e'er ye saw
When rigged at Millar's Corner.

Dressmakers are a' first-class,
Tailors 'bove the or'nar—
Gi'e us a trial, an' you'll ne'er pass
The far-famed Millar's Corner.
And should you buy your wife a gown,
You'll brag hoo weel it's worn 'er,
And every time you're in the town,
You'll ca' at Millar's Corner.

An' gif you're keen tae ken the news,
You'll find some "Andrew Horner,"
On Sunday morn, wha dearly lo'es
This celebrated corner.
He'll gi'e ye a' the oots an' ins,
Swear Beaconsfield's a foreigner,
And rave until he almost rins
His heid against the corner.

I'M CLEAN GANE GYTE:

A GRASPING AULD MAID'S LAMENT FOR THE LOSS OF HER SHARES
IN THE CITY O' GLASGOW BANK.

The Lord ha'e mercy on us a',
Or "pity," as the doctor sings,
But naething can allay ava,
When poverty my spirit stings;
Wae on thae shares, that's caused my sares,
'Twas a' my wyte;
My greed, my greed—my heid, my heid—
I'm clean gane gyte.

A creditor I micht ha'e been,
But twelve per cent.—twelve per cent.—
Fairly dazzled my auld e'en,
And no content—no content,
I made the shift that sent adrift
My every mite;
I'm ruined noo—I'm ruined noo,
And clean gane gyte.

I canna work, I canna sleep—
O wae is me—O wae is me;
Gif I my cozy beild could keep,
I wadna dree—I wadna dree;
But a' maun gang tae mend a wrang
That ne'er was right;
They've garr'd me rue, thae swinlin' crew—
I'm clean gane gyte.

Had I been young sic cares I'd flung
 Aff tae the win's, an' careless sung;
 But auld an' dune, an' wantin' tin,
 An' no a hoose tae shelter in,
 It's ill tae thole tae see your whole,
 Wi' ae fell clyte,
 Gang oot o' sicht—O, what a plicht—
 I'm clean gane gyte.

TO COAL JOCK.

Were I to meet the gentleman who adopted the above *nom-de-plume* when taking a "hop" at the *Mail* Poets, I would meet him on the most friendly terms—however, as I happen at this time to be my own critic, I consider the piece quite entitled to insertion, as it formerly appeared in the *Weekly Mail*.

I wondered Coal Jock ever mentioned daur,
 While rushin' heedless on, prepared for war
 Wi' poet chiels at least as guid's himsel',
 "Wha never o' a brither's failin's tell."

Like Sanny, Jock—though scarcely Sanny's wecht—
 Come's seekin' favour tae get leave tae fecht;
 Parnassus seems jist raised for Jock and such,
 And so were picks, an' pins, an' wadge, an' hutch.

I dinna blame the fule—a' fules are crank,
 Tho' mony clever chiels work doon the shank;
 Jock's steep Parnassus o' this wondrous age,
Lifts Johnnie tae her tap—thanks tae the cage.

Sic mortal impudence I never saw ;
 Gif Jock had blamed the *Mail* bards ane or twa
 I micht ha'e been constrained tae let him off,
 But no when a' this genius tries to scoff.

O, Scotland's greatest Jock, as black as soot,
 Wha fain wi' lear wad licht the darksome pit ;
 And when his neighbours look to see the lowe,
 It's on his bonnet—never in his pow.

I wat you thocht the readers o' the *Mail*
 Wad praise your lines, and ca' them grand and real ;
 Whae'er did praise 'twas shurely praise in jest,
 For deil a grain you're better than the rest.

THE BRAW WATER FOUNTAIN.

(Inscribed to the Water Fountain Committee.)

Hurrah for the fountain—the braw water fountain ;
 Hurrah for the builders and a' !
 They ha'e made it sae trig, jist the pride o' Coatbrig,
 And the honour o' Maister Whitelaw.

Chorus.—Sae what dae ye think o't ava ?
 I'm shure it looks wonnerfu' braw ;
 Sae bonnie and trig, jist the pride o' Coatbrig,
 And the honour o' Maister Whitelaw.

Jist speer at the natives wha leeve oot the toon,
 When they come back tae gi'e ye a ca',
 What they think o' the place : wi' a smile on their face
 They will say it looks wonnerfu' braw.

Chorus.—Sae what dae ye think o't ava, &c.

Yon four massive pillars o' granite sae fine,
Though the wind a' her hurricanes blaw,
Will stan' like a rock tae the pleasure o' folk,
And the honour o' Maister Whitelaw.

Chorus.—Sae what dae ye think o't ava, &c.

Frae the four lions' mouths the water'll gush,
Jist the bonniest ever you saw,
And, tae tell ye the truth, there's many a drooth
Will thank it and Maister Whitelaw.

Chorus.—Sae what dae ye think o't ava, &c.

ACROSTIC.

Ere I had finished cousin Janet's song,
My soul constrained me, love, to sing to thee,
My heart's desire is, we may join the throng,
And mingle with the gods of poesy.

Ah ! what a brilliant scene before us two,
Love in the bosom of Parnassus steep,
Luring us on where lays are sung anew,
And Heaven's minstrels all the watches keep :
Nature's own harvest loving spirits reap.

ANE THAT'S BLYTHE AN' BONNIE.

Come, rustic lyre, an' sing the nicht,
In praise o' ane that's blythe an' bonnie,
Wi' lauchin' e'e an' spirits licht,
She speaks as kind an' free as ony.

No like yon muckle wrunkled jaud,
That lo'es the beckin' an' the booin' ;
May heaven guard the simple lad
That e'er wad gang tae her a wooin'.

A muckle cloak an' wheezlin' breath,
An' ane o' granny's squinty mutches,
Wad mak' her in the play "Macbeth,"
The fiercest o' the three auld witches.

O, wad she tak' a thocht an' mend,
An' stop her jibin' an' her hintin' ;
Had I my will, the jaud I'd send
Across the hills ower by East Linton

But, Nellie lass, I'm gled that you
Are far superior and honest ;
She's off the bottle an' the screw,
But you've been bred the best an' bonniest.

O, may your sweetheart ever feel
Just like yoursel'—aye blythe an' cheerie ;
My wish is, may you get the chiel
That ne'er will ca' you waur than dearie.

KISSING.

“A. W. Coatbridge.—This correspondent favours us with the following lines, suggested by the ‘Opinions of the Press on Kissing,’ given in last week’s *Advertiser*.”

Folk may say what they like aboot kissin’,
 But, faith, I can tell ye it’s gran’;
 And often I think it’s a blessin’
 Tae get a bit cheeper frae Ann.

Tae be sure, some may happen tae differ
 Wi’ this wee bit notion o’ mine,
 But what could they gi’e as a niffer—
 This world has naething sae fine.

It’s the first thing we get when we’re born,
 And often the last when we dee;
 Though bachelors speak o’t wi’ scorn,
 Puir souls, they’ve forgotten its pree.

Their kissin’ cam’ a’ frae their mither—
 Tae mak’ them lie quate on her knee—
 But Oh, if they’d kiss jist anither,
 They’d say, “I was blin’—noo I see.”

Aye, and see through the beauty o’ kissin’;
 And wonder it wasna mair rife,
 And, Jacob-like, weep for the missin’
 O’ first-fruits o’ husband and wife.

A MOTHER TO HER DYING CHILD.

Close, close by your bedside grim death's ta'en his staun',
But ye fear na his cauld touch—ye ken whaur you're gaun,
Where the sun in his glory—no, never will dawn,
For you're gaun, my wee dear, to the Heavenly laun.

Nae wonder we ne'er see the tear in your e'e—
Your hopes are sae bricht, and your no feared tae dee ;
And the glories o' Heaven you'll constantly pree
For ever and ever, aye happy and free.

Awa' frae this vile warld, its troubles and care
Ne'er can enter the lan' that's sae happy and fair,
For the Saviour is there, and His glories you'll share,
For He deals them a' oot aye as free as the air.

Your heid dress will then be a braw golden croon,
That will shine like the stars or the clear silvery moon ;
And a' the sweet faces you'll see roun' an' roun',
Will chase awa' nicht and keep always the noon.

Sae fare-ye-weel, Agnes—contented wee wean,
We'll miss ye—but Oh ! your loss sune will be gain ;
Tae gang awa' wi' ye my heart it is fain,
But fare-ye-weel, Agnes, till we meet again.

LINES IN MEMORIAM.

DAVID M'CANN, WHO DIED 25TH SEPTEMBER, 1877.

“ Now almost over the bloom of the clover,
The song of the robin, the flush of the rose,
For a golden-haired comer thy beautiful summer
Is leaving her gardens of blush and repose.”

From “ The Little Boy’s Favourite Poems.”

Now he is over the bloom of the clover,
And sweet is his song in fair mansions above,
Where flowers are aye blooming, and angels illuming,
The flower of my bosom, the flower of my love,

Sad thoughts still awaken, to think he was taken
So early, where parents had hoped he would bloom ;
Still God’s flowers are given to bloom but in heaven,
Where no cloud obscures, and no solitary gloom.

But why all this mourning, since my love’s adorning,
The groves of sweet Paradise, where there is room,
The meek and the lowly, the pure and the holy
Are flowers that in Heaven eternally bloom.

The bright sun of Heaven—the Godhead has given,
A radiant lustre to brighten the scene ;
Though death has bereft us, and our sweet flower left us,
His sweet spirit glows in the sun’s golden sheen.

A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF ROBERT
BURNS.

Far from my native shore I tune the lyre,
To hail with rustic sound the auspicious morn,
And sing the spark of true poetic fire,
That lighted Scotia when her bard was born.

My own dear mother loved his minstrel lays,
And sung them sweetly at the gloamin' grey,
And when a child I've heard my father praise,
And sigh, too soon his soul had passed away.

My sister learned to lilt his "Bonnie Doon,"
And sweetly sang "The Lass o' Ballochmyle,"
While o'er his "Tam o' Shanter" I would croon,
And pawkily at "Souter Johnnie" smile.

Swift to those days my exiled heart returns,
Wherein yon humble cot, with true regard,
The family circle dawtit Robert Burns,
And crown'd him Scotia's own immortal bard.

His natal day may friendship rally round,
And welcome all his lovers with a smile,
And tersely talk, and let the joyful sound,
E'en mount the blue that "he was born in Kyle."

Then pledge to-night the humble peasant's name,
His "Highland Mary," and his "Bonnie Jean,"
And weave another laurel to his fame,
Who, Godlike, sang the hallowed Cottar's E'en.

THE PARTING SCENE.

Written by request, and inscribed to the Rev. GEORGE VAN DEURS,
Pastor of Oakwood Avenue Presbyterian Church, Troy, New York,
24th January, 1880.

The parting scene—e'en now I feel its pangs :
A wife and children's tears, a father's sigh ;
Sad melancholy shades my soul o'erhangs,
And trembling thoughts swift to my offspring fly.

Were hope no more "the anchor of the soul,"
And death, grim death, my spirit could descry,
I'd lay me down and let him o'er me roll,
And soar enraptured through yon cloudless sky.

'Twas thus I felt when first I trod the land—
This land of genius : Longfellow and Poe—
As hope outstretched her strong, unsullied hand,
And bid me to her bosom's kindly glow.

Yea, rays of faith and hope encircled me,
E'en "Castle Gardens" have their seeds of heaven :
God's testamental flower, so rich and free,
Whose gems of truth to all are freely given.

This Christian gift bids sorrows flee away,
And raised my thoughts above the stormy sea,
Where foaming billows dashed their angry spray,
But could not reach the rock that's cleft for me.

New York on New-Year's day I first beheld,
The crowded city had no charms for me,
Who longed to rest in some wee cosy beild,
And dream away the dangers of the sea.

I found the place that I so much desired,
And spent a week in comfort and repose ;
Then sallied forth to see and get me hired,
But stern misfortune vanquished not her foes.

Still have I hope in this—"He leadeth me,"
For He has led me to the hill of "Troy,"
Where God's own servant sounds salvation free,
And bids the Lord's own table all enjoy.

But still the parting scene has all its pangs—
A wife and children's tears, a father's sigh ;
Sad melancholy shades my soul o'erhangs,
And trembling thoughts swift to my offspring fly.

A C R O S T I C.

Re-echo forth thy cheering lays
On nature's grandeur all around,
Blest be thy muse, long be thy days,
Esteem and praise to thee redound ;
Rare are the poets to be found
That sing with such a joyful sound.

Thy songs of birds, and trees, and flowers,
Exalted they do seem to me ;
Nature in all its beauty towers,
Near to its God—when praised by thee ;
And all is joy and harmony.
Now waft his songs, O gentle breeze,
To Scotchmen far across the seas.

MY ANNIE AND ME.

Swift my sad thoughts sweep across the blue ocean,
And fly o'er the moorland to gaze on the lea,
Where love threw her mantle of lasting devotion,
Encircling the hearts of my Annie and me.

My own native woodland—O "Garden of Eden!"
Where blooms in its centre yon hawthorn tree,
Whose branches of blossom the sun shone to laden,
O'ershading the hearts of my Annie and me.

King of the minstrel song, near the clouds soaring,
Piping its shrill notes that sound to the sea,
Waking the feathered throng, waked to adoring,
The song that enraptured my Annie and me.

Though far from each other misfortune has severed,
Though my new abode be the land of the free,
I ne'er can be free till kind Heaven is favoured
To send my ain wifie and bairnies three.

Then blythly I'll sing at the dawn of the morning,
In praise of the good ship that sails o'er the sea,
And carries my own love who sadly I'm mourning,
How blythely I'll sing then, my Annie and me.

IN MEMORY OF MY DAUGHTER,
WEE JESSIE DUNN WARDROP, WHO DIED 4th MARCH, 1878.

Far above the starry lift,
With our best and dearest gift,
And the joyful throng ;
Hallelujah ! sweet the strain,
Sings so plaintively my wean,
This immortal song.

O, I think I see her face,
Radiant with Heaven's grace,
Round the glorious throne !
Hallelujah to the Lamb !
Glory to the great I Am !
Jessie's now His own.

Since she reached the golden shore,
And her sufferings are o'er,
What are we to do ?
Though our barks be e'er so frail,
Let us hoist the heavenly sail,
And we'll reach it too.

Then to mingle with the throng,
And to sing the joyful song,
With our darling wean.
O, for grace to keep us fast,
And to win the prize at last,
This eternal gain.

ACROSTIC—IN MEMORIAM.

MRS. JAMES GRANT, WHO DIED 27TH AUGUST, 1878.

Presented to the bereft husband.

Cold and cheerless now I feel,
All the world seems bleak and lone,
Thoughts reflective o'er me steal—
Hallowed thoughts of her who's gone ;
Endless praises now to sing,
Reigning with the Prince of Peace,
In that land where anthems ring,
Now, O death, where is thy sting—
Ever gone—O, blest release !

Calm, O gentle spirit, calm,
Longing, lingering, thoughts of thee,
Ailing, wailing, for the balm,
Rich to soothe bereft like me,
Kept to mourn, alas, for thee.

IN MEMORIAM.

MR. JAMES GRANT, WEST CALDER, DIED 17TH NOV., 1880.

He feels no more the cheerless gloom,
Who lived to love, who died to gain,
Nor dreaded not the darksome tomb,
For well he knew to meet his doom—
Would with with his loved one reign.

He mourned full two long years and more,
I knew no soul who loved so well ;
His partner who had gone before,
With Christ was his eternal store,
He treasured till he fell.

Oft have I heard his weary sigh,
Breathed to his God, his Christ, his all,
That seemed to draw his spirit nigh
The death he trembled not to die—
Soared swiftly to its call.

Where two fond souls of kindred mind
Have met to reign for evermore ;
And blessed the day they were entwined,
With faith and hope and love combined,
In him who's gone before.

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